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ABSTRACT

This document reports on a 30-month study of the Hispanic dropout problem in the Dallas Independent School District (Texas). Information was gathered by the following means: (1) 746 personal, individual interviews and 337 telephone interviews with middle and high school students who had left school, students who had remained in school, and parents of both these groups; (2) surveys of and meetings with principals, teachers, and counselors of the 27 middle and high schools with Hispanic enrollments of at least 5 percent; and (3) district archival records. The relationships between the following factors and staying in or dropping out of school are reported: (1) student and parent characteristics; (2) language; (3) students' attitudes and perceptions; (4) participation in in-school and out-of-school activities; (5) schooling history; (6) positive and supportive environment; (7) student involvement with gang activity, substance abuse, or criminal behavior; (8) student and parent aspirations and expectations; (9) student, school, or family predictor variables; and (10) school characteristics that administrators, counselors, teachers, and parents perceive as having an effect on school holding power. Recommendations for the prevention and recovery of dropouts, based on a review of current research literature and focus group meetings conducted with administrators, counselors, and teachers selected from 12 schools with medium and high Hispanic enrollments, indicate the need for a comprehensive approach incorporating strategies that focus on the family, the student, and the school. Statistical data are included on nine tables and four figures. A glossary and a list of 42 references are appended. (FMW)

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The Answer: Valuing Youth in Schools and Families

A REPORT ON HISPANIC DROPOUTS IN THE DALLAS INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

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CENTER FOR THE PREVENTION AND RECOVERY OF DROPOUTS
INTERCULTURAL DEVELOPMENT RESEARCH ASSOCIATION
5835 CALLAGHAN RD. • SUITE 350 • SAN ANTONIO, TX 78228
(512) 684-8180

UD 027 274

INTERCULTURAL DEVELOPMENT RESEARCH ASSOCIATION

5835 Callaghan Rd., Suite 350
San Antonio, Texas 78228
(512) 684-8180

The attached publication is being provided with our compliments because of your past interest in the work of our organization. We trust that you will find it both interesting and beneficial. We would be interested in your reactions after you have had an opportunity to review the document.

The research which is summarized in this volume was commissioned by the Dallas Independent School District (DISD) and conducted by the Intercultural Development Research Association (IDRA) for the district. The opinions expressed herein are solely those of IDRA and do not necessarily reflect the position or policies of DISD, and no official endorsement should be inferred.

The Answer:
Valuing Youth in Schools and Families

A REPORT ON HISPANIC DROPOUTS IN THE DALLAS INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

Project Director

María del Refugio Robledo, Ph. D.

Research Coordinators

Albert Cortez, Ph. D.
Michaela Penny-Velasquez, M.A.

Report Contributors

Dennis Alejos
Yolanda Garcia, M. Ed.
Richard Harris, Ph. D.
Roy Lee Johnson, M.A.
Cindy Raisor
Armando Trujillo, M. Ed., M.A.
Charles Cavazos
Frances M. Guzman, M.A.
Christine Johnson
Aurelio M. Montemayor, M.A.
Josie D. Supik, M.A.

CENTER FOR THE PREVENTION AND RECOVERY OF DROPOUTS
INTERCULTURAL DEVELOPMENT RESEARCH ASSOCIATION
5835 CALLAGHAN RD. • SUITE 350 • SAN ANTONIO, TX 78228
(512) 684-8180

Support Resources Team

Sarah Aleman
Charles Cavazos
Carl Gonzales
Martha A. Hernandez
Norma Marmolejo
Linda Serna
Irma Cabrera
Lucy Estrada
Rose Gonzales
Melinda Lechuga
Lupe Ornelas
Elsa Weiderhold

Field Services Teams

Supervisors

Diana Fernandez
Lydia Hernandez

Surveyors

Grace Acosta
Enrique Garcia Calles
Jose Angel Cano
Magdalena Castillo
Gilbert Castro
Leonard Chaires
Carmen Espinoza
Irma Flores
Yolanda Gallardo
Eva Garcia
Leonora Garcia
Myrta Gomez
Ismael Gonzalez
Augustina Hernandez
Susana Hernandez
Arturo Herrera
Yolanda Herrera
Maria Elena Juarez
Gloria Lafuente
Jerry Larrumbide
Aurora Madrigal
Alicia Martinez
Laurie Meggesin
Aurora Mesa
Gloria Orta
Estella Palomo
Daniel Pecina
Doralynn Pecina
Yolanda Peña
Juan Prieto
Maria Tafur
Maria Tapia
Gloria Tijerina
Josie Torres
Mary Villescaz
Tomás Zúñiga

Telephone Team

Supervisors

Sylvia Arredondo
Elizabeth Jones

Surveyors

Jeannette Alonso
Sylvia Arrangua
Olivia Arredondo
Isabel Cabrera
Gilbert Castro
Elida Cruz
Jeannie Daniels
Felicita Dominguez
Dioselina Garcia
Martha Garcia
Guizelle Lehman
Connie Ochoa
Virginia Rios
Juanita Rosas
Raul Subia
Betty Whitehouse

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PREFACE

In the past few years, the dropout problem in Texas has gained a new sense of urgency and prominence. This is due to the realization that startling dropout rates in the State are no longer acceptable in a marketplace that emphasizes sophisticated technological and literacy skills. Both the public and private sectors must now address the fact that between the 1983 and 1986 school years, 34% of all students and 46% of all Hispanic students dropped out of Texas high schools. The socioeconomic and political consequences of a resulting illiterate and unskilled labor force has prompted the Texas State Legislature to address the specific dropout problem faced by districts within the State. House Bill 1010, passed in April 1987, documents procedures for defining a "dropout" and for calculating the number of dropouts within a district. The Bill also requires districts to take steps for preventing dropouts, including the planning and development of remedial programs beginning in September 1988 with an At-Risk Coordinator to be responsible for implementing the necessary steps.

The Dallas Dropout Problem and IDRA

In 1986, the Dallas Independent School District (DISD), with a current Hispanic enrollment of 25% and a projected increase to 33% by 1990, contracted with the Intercultural Development Research Association (IDRA) to conduct a 30-month study of the Hispanic dropout problem in the DISD. As specified in the Request for Proposal, IDRA would be responsible for creating a plan that would help district to identify school dropouts and to prevent at-risk students from leaving school. To address DISD's needs, IDRA formulated research strategies to meet two goals: (1) to understand the nature and extent of the Hispanic dropout problem in the district, and (2) to develop policy alternatives and intervention strategies that would help retain Hispanic students in the district. The following list identifies the objectives set forth in the original Request for Proposal for meeting these goals.

1. To work with DISD's Department of Research, Evaluation and Audit to develop or modify a methodological definition of the dropout for DISD.

2. To design a longitudinal study methodology with appropriate statistical sampling techniques that would enable DISD to document, followup, and monitor dropout rates and characteristics of Hispanics in the district.

3. To implement a Baseline Field Study which would include interviews of presumed dropouts and would document their educational status.

4. To develop a profile of the Hispanic dropout and identify factors associated with dropping out.

5. To develop a "turn-key" system which would facilitate the implementation of a longitudinal study by DISD's Department of Research, Evaluation, and Audit.

6. To develop a research-based demonstrable attrition intervention model and related policy recommendations for instructional, administrative, and budgetary consideration in addressing the Hispanic dropout problem in DISD.

As part of their research effort, IDRA staff collaborated with the DISD Research and Evaluation staff, a DISD-appointed At-Risk Coordinator, and Ad Hoc Committee members from the Hispanic Advisory Committee in order to identify the issues to be explored; establish the methodology to be used in acquiring information from students, parents, and school personnel; and formulate program and policy recommendations.

Plan of Research Presentation

Comprehensive reports for all phases of the study are included in six volumes:

Summary Document:
The Answer: Valuing Youth in Schools and Families

Supporting Documents:

Volume	I	Methodological Handbook
Volume	II	Working Document: First Year Summary of Findings
Volume	III	Working Document: Second Year Summary of Findings
Volume	IV	Conclusions and Program Recommendations
Volume	V	Data Files and Computer Specifications

The Summary Document summarizes the research findings and their implications. Volume I specifies the procedures used for collecting and analyzing data. Volumes II and III summarize the findings for each phase of the study, while Volume IV discusses the conclusions and recommendations developed from these findings. Volume V lists and describes the files created from the data collected during both phases.

Acknowledgements

We, the research staff at IDRA, extend sincere thanks to everyone participating in the study. The participants' willingness to work with us made this research possible. For the field services teams who diligently surveyed each respondent, we thank you for your commitment to the project. We are grateful to the past and current members of the Ad Hoc Advisory Committee on Hispanic Dropouts: Mr. William Acosta, Dr. Catalina Garcia, Dr. Baltazar Acevedo, Dr. Estevan Flores, Ms. Yolanda Garcia, and Dr. Rosita Apodaca and to the Hispanic Advisory Committee for providing invaluable feedback throughout all phases of the research. Our appreciation also goes to Dr. William Webster, our project liaison at the Dallas Independent School District (DISD), who facilitated all aspects of our research and did so with support, cooperation, and efficiency. Thanks also to Dr. George Olson of DISD who supported the research effort and furnished any necessary district information for conducting the study. We also extend our appreciation to Dr. Ruby Morris for her insight and inspiration.

The Dallas school district is to be commended for addressing the dropout problem before it was identified as a Texas and national problem.

Our gratitude and admiration are always with the Board and staff of Intercultural Development Research Association. Their expertise provides a continual source of inspiration.

GLOSSARY

Archival Data	Student data obtained from DISD archives, including schooling history, student achievement, language proficiency, and program participation.
Contacts	Individuals from DISD records who were telephoned for participating in an in-person interview.
Dataset	A file created from the collected data for purposes of analysis or computation.
Focus-Group Meeting	Meeting of DISD administrators, counselors, and teachers for expressing their opinions concerning the limitations that prevent schools from achieving full student enrollment, and factors which are present to facilitate change.
High Risk	School attenders who were expected to drop out of school before graduation based on data collected during Phase I and II.
High Strata	A category of DISD schools having a high concentration of Hispanics, (51% and above).
Instruments	Survey forms (telephone, mail, and in-person) used to interview respondents.
Low Strata	A category of DISD schools having a low concentration of Hispanics, (6% to 25%).
Medium Strata	A category of DISD schools having a medium concentration of Hispanics, (26% to 50%).
Non-Attender	A DISD district term referring to students who failed all standard classes due to excessive absenteeism.

Parents of School Leavers and Attenders	Refers to parents of students who have left school and parents of students who still attend school. Does not imply matched case.
Participants	Those who conducted research or collected data, including the IDRA Center for the Prevention and Recovery of Dropouts, Dallas Independent School District Research and Evaluation Department, Ad Hoc Advisory Committee.
Phase I	Period of time during which initial data were collected for the study: October 1986 - May 1987.
Phase II	Period of time during which second set of data were collected: February 1988 - July 1988.
Potential Interviewees	Respondents who agreed to participate in an in-person interview.
Protocol	Standard procedure for collecting data, including administering surveys: in-person, mail, and telephone.
Regression	Statistical procedure that was used to identify common predictive factors among students who have left school.
Respondents	Interviewees in a study sample.
School Attenders	Students in the study sample who were still attending school; also referred to as "stay-ins" in several tables throughout the volumes.
School Leavers	Students who left school, dropped out, before graduating; also referred to as "dropouts" in several tables throughout the volumes.
Significance	The likelihood that something occurs by chance less than 5% of the time.

Target Schools

Middle and high school campuses in the Dallas Independent School District that constituted the study sample. Campuses with a Hispanic enrollment greater than 5% (1986) were included in the study.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In February 1986, the Dallas Independent School District (DISD) contracted with the Intercultural Development Research Association (IDRA) of San Antonio, Texas to conduct a 30-month study of the Hispanic students who leave DISD schools. The study had two principal goals: (1) to understand the nature and extent of the Hispanic dropout problem in the district, and (2) to develop policy alternatives and intervention strategies that would help keep Hispanic students in school.

In order to reach these goals, IDRA framed ten research questions based on (1) current research literature in dropout prevention and recovery, (2) IDRA's empirical and school-based experience in the education of at-risk students, and (3) input from DISD and its constituents. To answer each question, extensive and intensive data collection procedures were carried out in two phases. Phase I data were collected from the fall of 1986 to the spring of 1987 for the purposes of (1) developing a profile of the Hispanic dropout in DISD, and (2) developing a predictive model of the factors associated with dropping out of school. Phase II data were collected in the (spring of 1988 in order to test the validity of the dropout profile and the adequacy of the predictive model, which were developed in Phase I.

Information was gathered through 746 personal, individual interviews and 337 telephone interviews of students who had left school, students who had remained in school, and parents of these two groups. Participating DISD schools were stratified on the basis of Hispanic student enrollment density within middle and high school campuses (high = more than 50%, middle = 26% to 50%, low = less than 25%), and the proportion of high school Hispanic enrollment to middle school Hispanic enrollment. Information was also collected via surveys of and meetings with principals, teachers, and counselors of the 27 middle and high school campuses with Hispanic enrollments of at least 5 percent. Additional data were obtained through district archival records and through reviews of district documents related to dropout prevention and recovery efforts in DISD. Throughout the study, input and feedback were provided by DISD personnel and by members of the Ad Hoc Committee on Hispanic Dropouts. The following report presents a discussion of the definition and calculation of a DISD dropout rate, the major findings for each research question, and specific recommendations for action.

Definition and Calculation of Dropout Rates

The development of a dropout definition is the initial key element in the dropout identification and calculation process. In Texas, H. B. 1010 (passed in May 1987) defines a dropout as a student:

(1) who does not hold a high school diploma or its equivalent;

(2) who is absent from the public school in which the student is enrolled for a period of 30 or more consecutive days; and

(3) whose attendance within that period at another private or public school cannot be evidenced.

The variations in dropout rates can be explained by variances in the factors used in the computation formula. According to Morrow (1986), there are three critical manipulable factors involved in the calculation of dropout rates: (1) the time frame during which the number of students is counted, (2) the range of grade levels included in the dropout rate calculation, and (3) the student accounting procedures used by the district (e.g., average daily attendance versus average membership).

In Dallas ISD, the dropout definition issue has been given extensive consideration. Review of DISD research on the dropout issue reflects that local definitions have evolved as the staff has worked with the issue and incorporated refinements which take into account factors left unaddressed in earlier dropout estimation efforts. DISD was required to submit dropout statistics for the 1987-1988 school year to the Texas Education Agency. Data formed part of the Public Education Information Management System and were designed to conform to the H.B. 1010 definition presented above. These data indicate that 7,619 (12.3%) students dropped out of the DISD during the 1987-1988 school year; (2,890 students were "known dropouts" whereas 4,729 were "possible dropouts," i.e., withdrew for unknown reasons). The reported attrition from the class of 1988 (Grade 7, '82) was 5,751 (45.3%) (DISD, 1988).

Major Findings

The following findings are the result of data collection efforts from Phases I and II. Interview responses which were consistent from one year to the next and across interviews (student and parent in-person and telephone) were considered valid and used to generate the findings that follow. They are presented by research question and focal area. A review of the current literature relevant to each research question is presented in Part I: Study Findings and Results.

Research Question 1: ***What student and parent characteristics affect a student's propensity to stay in or drop out of school?***

A. Age (at time of interview)

Overagedness at grade level increases the propensity for dropping out of school.

B. Birthplace and Length of U.S. Residence

The majority of school leavers and of school attenders are U.S. born.

If a student's mother was not born in the U.S., the student has a greater chance of staying in school.

If a student's foreign-born mother has resided in the U.S. for 10 or more years, the student's odds of staying in school are increased.

C. Parents' Education

Parents' education affects their children's chances of dropping out of school. In general, the lower the parents' educational level, the greater the chances the student will drop out.

D. Employment

Most parents of students, whether school attenders or school leavers, work. Most mothers work in service maintenance jobs such as housecleaning. Most fathers work as skilled laborers which include mechanics and carpenters.

The student's chances of staying in school are affected by whether or not the father works. If the father is not working, the odds of a student dropping out are increased.

E. Household Characteristics

Students who live in households with both parents have better chances of staying enrolled in school.

Students who have children of their own at home run a greater risk of leaving school.

F. Youth's Current Status

Over half of all students who have left school are not working. One in five is married and has children.

Most students who have left school are not re-enrolled in school, are not pursuing a GED, and have not entered job-training programs.

Research Question 2: ***What is the relationship between language and whether or not a student stays enrolled in school?***

Most students, both leavers and attenders, speak English and Spanish at home.

If a student believes that he or she does not read or write English very well, he or she is more likely to drop out of school.

Hispanic students whose first language is Spanish have a better chance of remaining in school.

Hispanic students whose parents encouraged bilingualism are also more likely to remain in school.

Research Question 3: ***What is the relationship between students' attitudes and perceptions and whether or not a student stays in or drops out of school?***

A. Youth's Likes and Dislikes

Students tend to remain in school if they like school personnel, feel positively about teachers and administrators, and perceive both school personnel and other students as liking youth with positive attributes (e.g., "good," polite).

Students who have left school perceive teachers as disliking Hispanics. They also perceive teachers and other students as liking negative characteristics in students (e.g., gang members, dropouts).

B. Helps and Hindrances

Most students believe study skills are most helpful for staying in school, while peer pressure and peer harassment are the greatest hindrances.

C. Importance of Finishing High School

Although the majority of students believe it is important to finish high school, those who leave consider graduation as less important and feel their parents think the same.

D. Leaving School: First Thoughts and Reasons

Students have a greater chance of leaving school if they begin to consider leaving in the transition school years (7,9) and if they leave because school is too hard or to work.

Among students who leave school, problems with school personnel and pregnancy are the principal reasons for leaving. Students still enrolled in school cite pregnancy and work as reasons for leaving school, should they ever decide to leave.

E. Ethnic Composition

Most student leavers and attenders want to change their school's ethnic composition: Hispanic students enrolled in school feel there are not enough White students; Hispanic students who leave school feel there are too many White and Black students.

Both school attenders and school leavers feel there are not enough Hispanic teachers.

F. Parents' Perceptions

Students tend to remain in school if their parents believe both they and the school can do something to help students stay in school, usually in the areas of classroom and instructional organization and support.

Research Question 4: ***What is the relationship between participation in in-school and out-of-school activities, and staying in or dropping out of school?***

A. Youth

Most students, both attenders and leavers, participate in middle and high school activities (mainly sports). Involvement in school/community and out-of-school activities increases a student's chances of remaining in school, as does encouragement from their parents to participate in school activities.

B. PARENTS

Most parents visit school for meetings with teachers and say they would visit more often if they had more time, were more interested, or would meet at convenient hours.

Students have a greater chance of staying enrolled in school if (a) their parents visit school for positive reasons (such as awards ceremonies), and (b) parents show interest in school programs.

Students whose parents visit school mainly in response to discipline problems and teacher/parent meetings have a greater chance of leaving school. Parents of student leavers feel they visit the school too often for those reasons.

Most parents of both school leavers and attenders feel there should be more visits for parent meetings and school programs.

Research Question 5: ***What is the relationship between schooling history and dropping out of school?***

A. MOBILITY

The more times a student changes schools, the greater are the chances that he or she will leave school.

B. WORK

Working more than 15 hours per week while in school increases the chances of a student's leaving school.

Most students who work while in school do so in service maintenance jobs in order to have spending money or to help with home expenses. Most earn slightly above minimum wage.

All students who work more than 40 hours per week while in school ultimately leave school.

C. GRADES AND RETENTION

Receiving failing grades at the elementary, middle or high school level increases the chances of dropping out of school.

Being retained in a grade increases the chances of dropping out of school during the middle and high school years.

D. ABSENTEEISM

A high absentee rate (i.e., more than 11 days during a school year) increases the chances of a student's leaving school.

Students who leave school frequently cite "feeling out of place," and boring classes as reasons for absenteeism.

E. EARLY SCHOOLING

Children who have attended pre-school programs tend to remain in school.

Research Question 6: ***What is the relationship between a positive and supportive environment and dropping out of school?***

A. RELATIONSHIP WITH OTHERS

Most students, both leavers and attenders, get along with parents and friends, but students who remain enrolled in school feel more comfortable discussing school or personal problems with school personnel, parents and friends.

B. ENCOURAGEMENT

Most student attenders and students leavers are encouraged by family to remain in school, but those who remain enrolled are also encouraged by school and church personnel.

Most students know good friends or family members who have dropped out of school, and it is students' peers who are most likely to encourage a student to leave school. However, those who do leave are also encouraged by school personnel to do so.

C. CLASSROOM PARTICIPATION

Students who do not ask questions when they do not understand a lesson tend to leave school.

D. STUDY AIDS

Odds of staying in school are increased if study aids such as a quiet place to study, dictionaries/encyclopedias, a typewriter and books are available in the home.

E. FAMILY

Family problems including conflicts with parents and relatives, household responsibilities, or financial concerns increase the odds of leaving school.

Most parents of students who have left school report no notification by the school regarding problems with their children and maintain there were, in fact, no problems to report.

Research Question 7: ***What is the relationship between student involvement with gang activity, substance abuse, or criminal behavior and staying in or dropping out of school?***

Students who participate in gang activity, use alcohol or drugs, or are involved in criminal activity are more likely to leave school.

Research Question 8: ***What effects do student and parent aspirations and expectations have on students' propensity to drop out or stay enrolled in school until graduation?***

A. FUTURE EMPLOYMENT

Students who believe they will reach their goal stand a greater chance of remaining in school.

Students who do not know what they will be doing in 5 years have an increased chance of leaving school.

Most student leavers and attenders expect to be working in 5 years and want to work as professionals, technicians or office and clerical staff. However, students enrolled in school expect to work as professionals; students who leave school have lower expectations and believe they will be employed as skilled craft workers rather than professionals.

Students who believe their parents expect them to work in order to support the family run a greater risk of dropping out.

B. FUTURE EDUCATION

Most students who leave school expect to earn a GED while most students who remain in school expect a college degree. Most students who have left school are planning to return to school the next fall but need support (e.g., child-care, financial assistance, counseling) to return.

C. PARENTS' ASPIRATIONS AND EXPECTATIONS

Most parents of school leavers and attenders have high expectations for their children and believe their children will attain their goals.

The odds of a student's leaving school are increased if parents expect their children to join the military or marry before high school graduation.

Research Question 9: ***What student, school or family/community characteristics have been found to predict dropping out?***

A series of multiple regression analyses were conducted for the purpose of identifying variables which would predict which students were most likely to drop out of school. Data for the analyses were obtained from several different sources: student and parent data from Phases I and II, and student archival records.

Findings from the Student Archival Records

The strongest predictors of a student dropping out of school are age, variables related to poverty, language difficulties and poor performance in math and reading.

Findings from the Student and Parent Surveys

Regression analyses were conducted on 1987 student and parent data. The variables found to be predictive of dropping out were also used in regression analyses conducted on 1988 student and parent data. Findings from analyses of combined student and parent data show that, for both years, the age of a student, not having attended kindergarten, not having discussed problems with counselors, and having the father born outside of the U.S. increase the probability of a student dropping out of school. Findings from analyses conducted on student data only show that age, middle school mobility, drug use, and not discussing problems with counselors are also dropout predictors for both 1987 and 1988 data.

The 1988 survey contained questions that distinguished three groups of respondents: (1) school leavers, (2) school attenders who never thought about leaving school, and (3) school attenders who thought about dropping out. An analysis of variance showed marked differences among groups.

School attenders who never thought about leaving school were more likely to:

* like school counselors
* believe that school administrators are in control
* be involved in school hobbies or clubs
* have attended kindergarten
* say they have discussed problems with counselors
* say administrators encouraged them to stay
* expect to go to college
* have parents who attend school programs
* have parents who expect them to graduate and go to college.

They are less likely to:

* have changed middle schools
* had their parents asked to a school conference
* have friends who encouraged them to leave.

School attenders who thought of leaving were more like school attenders who never thought of leaving on the following issues:

* believing administrators are in control
* the extent of middle school mobility
* saying that administrators encourage them to stay
* having parents who expect them to graduate from high school.

They are more similar to the school leavers on:

* not liking counselors
* not participating in hobby and club activities
* having parents asked to go to school
* not discussing problems with counselors
* having friends encourage them to leave school
* not expecting to go to college
* having parents who do not attend school programs or expect them to go to college.

Some of these variables may represent symptoms of the problems that lead to leaving school, but in combination they suggest that there is a complex set of relationships involving friends, family, counselors, administrators and school activities that help distinguish school leavers and potential leavers from other students. It may be that positive experiences in two or three of these areas can offset negative experiences in the others.

Missing data, attributable to non-responses from the subjects and incomplete student records, resulted in loss of cases for statistical analyses. Specifically, non-responses in surveys resulted in less than half of the eligible cases being used in the final analysis (approximately 40%). An even greater percentage of archival data was incomplete, resulting in even fewer cases being used in any analyses involving student records (approximately 30%). The implications of these missing data are two-fold: (1) generalizations made from the final analysis must be made cautiously; with more complete records and responses the relative importance of variables in some of the regression models could change, and (2) incomplete school records themselves could be considered predictive of dropping out for the evidence suggests that students who drop out of school are more likely to have incomplete official records.

Research Question 10: ***What school characteristics do administrators, counselors, teachers, and parents perceive as having an effect on students' propensity to drop out or stay enrolled in school until graduation?***

A. THE IDEAL SCHOOL

Administrators, counselors, and teachers were asked to list the ideal school response(s) for full school enrollment of Hispanic students. According to school personnel, the ideal school would have active parental involvement, a lower student-personnel ratio, more student involvement and motivation, a varied and relevant curriculum, and a pleasant school environment.

Parents, in response to the same question, indicated the ideal school would have better home-school communication and a more positive school learning environment.

B. ASSISTING FORCES

Administrators, counselors, and teachers were asked to list those forces which were assisting the school/district in achieving the ideal school.

The assisting forces most frequently mentioned were the ESOL Program (English for Speakers of Other Languages), and teachers with positive teaching characteristics, (i.e., dedicated, supportive, concerned, responsive, less apathetic).

The assisting forces, as described by parents, were bilingual communication and information from school to home, bilingual teachers and counselors in the school, good teachers and principals, a good curriculum, the use of motivators and incentives (e.g., trophies, awards), good home-school communication, and active parental involvement.

C. Restraining Forces

Forces which were restraining the school/district from achieving the ideal school, as indicated by school personnel, included too much paperwork for teachers and counselors, the lack of/little parental support and involvement, a large student-personnel ratio, and a restrictive state-mandated curriculum.

Parents indicated the major restraining forces were a negative learning environment, poor teaching, and teenage pregnancy.

D. Necessary Steps to Achieve Ideal

School personnel indicated that steps taken to achieve the ideal should increase teacher sensitivity and awareness to multiethnic changes and problems within the school, increase parental involvement, provide a comprehensive curriculum that develops the whole child, and increase parental awareness of required skills and responsibilities.

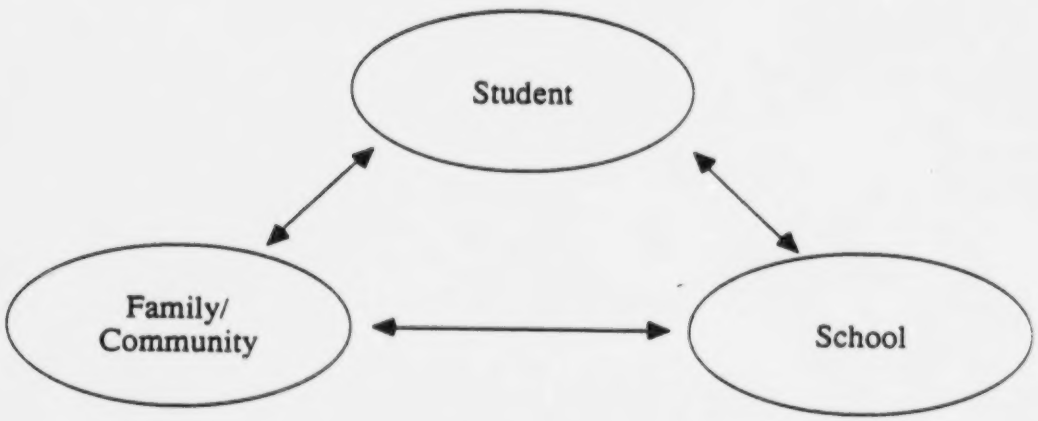
Parents had three suggestions for achieving the ideal school. They indicated the need for more motivating and inspiring school activities such as field trips designed to expose students to a variety of enriching experiences. Parents also suggested the development of a problem-solving group either on a daily or weekly basis so that parents and students are able to consult with qualified personnel. Finally, parents felt it necessary for teachers to deal with pertinent social issues in the classroom; parents indicated that students need emotional and social guidance as well as academic guidance.

Recommendations

Recommendations for the prevention and recovery of dropouts are based on a review of current relevant literature, this study's findings and conclusions and the results of focus-group interviews conducted with a group of administrators, counselors and teachers selected from twelve DISD campuses with medium and high enrollment of Hispanic students.

Conclusions from these sources clearly indicate that comprehensive measures are needed to keep Hispanic students in school and succeeding with their studies. To frame the following recommendations, and give them a comprehensive context, a diagram shows the basic relationships in the education of children within a triangle: the student, the school, and the family/community (see Figure 1 below). These recommendations call for changes in all three sides of the triangle: each is positive and visionary, interrelated and interdependent.

Figure 1
The Interrelated and Interdependent Roles of Student, School and Family/Community



Family-centered strategies consider parental involvement crucial and recognize the value and strength of the Hispanic family. Student-centered strategies focus on the student rather than on the program or curriculum; success is measured by the degree of student motivation, engagement and achievement. Campus-focused strategies require the entire campus to respond to the needs of students rather than to a set of programs for students labeled "at-risk of dropping out"; accelerated learning ensures that at-risk students are taught at a faster pace and are targeted for success.

Within each side of the triangle, specific recommendations address different audiences: policy makers, central office administrators, principals and support staff, and community groups. Recommendations address each audience with the purpose of giving each group validity, support and responsibility.

Student-Centered

A major focus of the recommendations is that responses be student-centered, suggesting that all services and strategies be integrated to assist the student in a whole or complete way. The recommended environment is one where staff holds positive assumptions and perceptions of the student, which reduces the chances of any teacher or other adult discouraging the student from staying in school, and increases the number of adults that will encourage the student to stay in school.

Family-Centered

The involvement of parents is crucial. The current findings reinforce what the literature indicates: Parents are an important influence in the education of their children. Support for the family directly increases the chances that a student will stay in school and complete his/her schooling. The recommendations are based on positive assumptions about Hispanic families. A family-centered approach involves regular and consistent interaction between home and school, and the encouragement of parents to participate in all aspects of the educational process.

Campus Focus Support

In keeping with the positive and comprehensive approach, programs, services and strategies are campus-wide rather than program specific. Campuses with significant numbers of Hispanic at-risk students are targeted for resources that would produce student-centered/family-focused schools. The results sought are valued campuses, staff, students and families. The school context recommended is: learning activities characterized by high expectations; a learning environment characterized by high status for the participants; a faster paced curriculum that actively engages the students' interest and motivates them to learn. All students are targeted for success within the total context of the curriculum and instruction, in an accelerated rather than in a traditional, slower remediation effort.

INTRODUCTION

In February 1986, the Dallas Independent School District (DISD) contracted with the Intercultural Development Research Association (IDRA) of San Antonio, Texas to conduct a 30-month study of Hispanic students who leave DISD schools. The study had two principal goals: (1) to understand the nature and extent of the Hispanic dropout problem in the district, and (2) to develop policy alternatives and intervention strategies that would help keep Hispanic students in school.

In order to reach these goals, IDRA framed ten research questions based on (1) current research literature in dropout prevention and recovery, (2) IDRA's empirical and school-based experience in the education of at-risk students, and (3) input from DISD and its constituents. To answer each question, extensive and intensive data collection procedures were carried out in two phases. Phase I data were collected from the fall of 1986 to the spring of 1987 for the purposes of (1) developing a profile of the Hispanic dropout in DISD, and (2) developing a predictive model of the factors associated with dropping out of school. Phase II data were collected in the spring 1988 in order to test the validity of the dropout profile. and the adequacy of the predictive model, which were developed in Phase I.

Information was gathered through 746 personal individual interviews and 337 telephone interviews of students who had left school, students who remained in school, and parents of these two groups. Additional data were obtained through district archival records and through reviews of district documents related to dropout prevention and recovery efforts in DISD. Throughout the study, input and feedback were provided by DISD personnel and members of the Ad Hoc Committee on Hispanic Dropouts.

This summary report presents an overview of the study's design and its participants and highlights the significant findings of this 30-month investigation. Part I presents a review of current literature relevant to each research question, the study's major findings, and the results from the multiple regression analyses which yielded variables predictive of dropping out of school; Part II includes the implications of these findings and recommendations for dropout prevention and recovery.

General Description Of DISD And Dallas County

Dallas, located in Dallas County, is a large urban city with a population of 1,057,860 and an average household income of $38,196. The Dallas population is comprised of 61.4% White, 29.4% Black, 12.3% Hispanic origin, and 9.2% other. Although the general population is predominantly Anglo. the DISD's student body is largely comprised of ethnic minorities. The DISD student population includes 48% African American, 31% Hispanic, 18% White, 1.5% Asian, and .5% American Indian (DISD, 1989).

According to the 1980 census, 60% of all youth from ages 16 to 24 in Dallas County lived in the city of Dallas. Males, ages 16 to 19, in Dallas County had a civilian employment rate of 62.9% if they were Hispanic, 59.2% if they were White (non-Hispanic), and 36.5% if they were Black (non-Hispanic). For males, ages 20 to 24, the employment rates were 85.2% for Hispanics, 85.7% for Whites, and 72.1% for Blacks. Females, ages 16 to 19, in Dallas County had a civilian employment rate of 42.5% if Hispanic, 54.9% if White, and 33.2% if Black. For females, ages 20 to 24, the employment rates were 65.9% for Hispanics, 76.4% for Whites, and 65.5% for Blacks, (IDRA, 1986).

Research Design

Study goals were addressed through a series of research questions:

Research Question 1: ***What student and parent characteristics affect a student's propensity to stay in or drop out of school?***

- Age (at time of interview)
- Birth and Length of U.S. Residence
- Parent's Education
- Employment
- Household Characteristics
- Youth's Current Status

Research Question 2: ***What is the relationship between language and whether or not a student stays enrolled in school?***

- First language
- Language domains
- Spanish proficiency
- English proficiency
- Language encouragement

Research Question 3: ***What is the relationship between students' attitudes and perceptions and whether or not a student stays in or drops out of school?***

- Interests
- Attitudes towards school
- Attitudes towards peers/students
- Perceived racial/ethnic mix
- Perceptions of teacher and administrator characteristics

Research Question 4: ***What is the relationship between participation in in-school and out-of-school activities, and staying in or dropping out of school?***

- In-school student participation in activities (middle and high school)
- Out-of-school student participation in activities
- Parent participation in school activities
- Student involvement in leadership activities

Research Question 5: ***What is the relationship between schooling history and dropping out of school?***

- Early schooling
- Retention
- Absences
- Mobility
- Grades
- Honors and awards
- Course requests
- Library use
- Disciplinary action

Research Question 6: ***What is the relationship between a positive and supportive environment and dropping out of school?***

- Confidence network
- Engagement
- Encouragement
- Home environment

Research Question 7: ***What is the relationship between student involvement with gang activity, substance abuse, or criminal behavior and staying in or dropping out of school?***

- Gang activity
- Alcohol and drug abuse
- Criminal activity/record

Research Question 8: ***What effects do selected student and parent aspirations and expectations have on students' propensity to drop out or stay enrolled in school until graduation?***

- Job expectations
- Graduation and post graduation
- Short-term plans

Research Question 9: ***What student, school, or family/community characteristics have been found to predict dropping out?***

Research Question 10: ***What school characteristics do administrators, counselors, teachers, and parents perceive as having an effect on students' propensity to drop out or stay enrolled in school until graduation?***

- The ideal school
- Assisting forces
- Restraining forces
- Necessary steps to achieve ideal school

Researchers addressed these questions in two phases. During Phase I (Fall 1986 to Spring 1987), student and parent data were used to:

(1) develop a profile of the Hispanic dropout in DISD, and
(2) develop a predictive model of the factors associated with dropping out of school.

In Phase II data served to:

(1) test the validity of the dropout profile developed in year one, and
(2) test the adequacy of the predictive model developed in Phase I.

Respondents/Phase I and II

The study sample for Phase I was selected from DISD school records and included Hispanic students who had left school during the 1985-86 school term, a random sample of 1,000 Hispanic students still in school during the same period, and Hispanic non-attenders (students who had failed all standard

classes due to excessive absences). Also included in the study sample were parents of school leavers and school attenders and DISD school personnel from both middle and high schools.

Phase II subjects included Hispanic school leavers presumed to have dropped out during the 1986-87 school year according to DISD records, Hispanic school attenders who remained in school during the same school period, parents of 1986-87 school leavers and school attenders, and DISD school personnel. A sample of Phase I respondents including school leavers, school attenders, their parents and non-attenders were also included for tracking purposes.

Participating schools were stratified on the basis of Hispanic student enrollment density within middle and high school campuses (high = more than 50%, middle = 26% to 50%, low = less than 26%), and the proportion of high school Hispanic enrollment to middle school Hispanic enrollment. Campuses with fewer than 5% Hispanic enrollments were excluded from the sample.

Methodology

Archival data such as schooling history, achievement scores, and demographics were collected on all student participants during both phases. Other methods of data collection included (1) individual in-person interviews with school leavers, school attenders and their parents, (2) telephone interviews with parents of Phase II respondents as well as telephone tracking interviews with Phase I student respondents, (3) focus-group interviews with DISD school personnel, (4) focus-group interviews with parents of Phase I school leavers and school attenders, and (5) mail surveys of Phase II respondents who could not be contacted by telephone. All student interview questionnaires with parallel parent versions were translated into Spanish. Figures 2 and 3 lists the study's participants, the selection process, and the data collection methods.

All field interviewers and field operations supervisors were bilingual and bicultural, knew the Dallas area, and, most importantly, were sensitive to the communities in which they collected data. To insure methodological rigor, the field teams were trained to follow protocols specially developed for the standardized and uniform administration of questionnaires.

Difficulties in Contacting School Leavers

It is important to note that the research staff encountered a number of difficulties in their attempts to contact the presumed school leavers as listed in the DISD files. Among the difficulties were the high mobility rate of school leavers and the lack of interest or willingness among school leavers to participate in an in-person interview. Some school leavers who initially agreed to participate in the study chose not to be interviewed when the field interviewers called to schedule the appointments.

These difficulties resulted in a contact rate of 19% for Phase I and 33 % for Phase II (see Figure 4).

During Phase I, the file of all eligible school leavers was exhausted. Out of an initial pool of 1744 presumed school leavers, 1418 (81%) were considered "no contacts." These individuals could not be reached for several reasons: (1) no telephone, (2) a wrong number (as listed in the DISD files), (3) a disconnected phone, or (4) no answer after six call-attempts by the research staff. Each "no contact" was mailed an abbreviated survey form along with a stamped, self-addressed return envelope. Of the 1418 mail surveys, 274 (19%) had no forwarding addresses and were returned by the post office.

During Phase II, a proportion of Hispanic students within each grade level (7-11) was randomly selected from the campuses as in the sample. This methodology differed from Phase I which tapped a percentage of Hispanic enrollments within each campus. Of the target sample size of school leavers (N=1289) for Phase II, 870 (67%) were listed as "no contacts." The entire pool of seventh (N=419) and eighth graders (N=363) was exhausted in order to reach the target sample sizes for the two grade levels (N=782). Seventy (5%) school leavers were interviewed. The remaining 37% (N=349) either refused to participate in the study, were not school leavers and were either still in school in DISD or another school system, had moved from Dallas, or were not contacted since the required target number per grade level had been reached.

Of the mail surveys sent to the "no contacts," 219 of 745 (29%) were returned with no forwarding address.

Such documentation of the difficulties in contacting school leavers is important for identifying the constraints particular to this population, i.e., the frequency with which they move and the ease with which they "disappear," leaving no forwarding addresses and/or contact persons. Such difficulties have implications not only for future dropout research endeavors but also for tracking and recordkeeping efforts.

Data Analysis

All completed interviews and surveys were processed by IDRA's Research and Evaluation staff. Processing included editing both closed and open-ended interview items, coding and computerizing all data. Data entry of each interview schedule was carefully verified to insure accuracy.

Data analyses involved SPSS programming for producing frequency distributions, cross tabulations, Pearson correlations and multiple regressions.

Results

The following report presents the dropout rate derived for DISD and the rationale and procedures used, the results of Phase I and Phase II, and recommendations for the prevention and recovery of dropouts. A listing of works consulted for this report is included in the last section of the report.

Figure 2
Summary of Phase I Respondents, Sample Sizes and Methods

Who participated in this study?			
PHASE I Fall 1986 - Spring 1987			
Respondents	**Sample Size**	**Origin/Method for Drawing Sample**	**Method of Data Collection**
STUDENTS			

• Dropouts and Stay-Ins	• Dropouts:
	  • High School (N=116)
	  • Middle School (N= 22)
	  Total (N=138)
	• Stay-Ins:
	  • High School (N=107)
	  • Middle School (N= 70)
	  Total (N=177)
		• DISD Datafiles:
		  • 1744 records of presumed dropouts from 1985-86 school year
		  • Random sample of 2000 Hispanic students enrolled in DISD 1985-86 school year
		• Stratified Proportional Sample
		  • Density of Hispanic student enrollment within middle and high school campuses (high, medium, low): (N=1744)
		  ○ High (greater than 50%)
		  ○ Medium (between 26% and 50%)
		  ○ Low (between 6% and 25%)
		  • Proportion of high school Hispanic enrollment to middle school enrollment
			• not reachable after a minimum of 6 attempts
			• Initial Telephone Contact
			• Individual In-Person Interview

	• Non-Attenders: (N=30)	• DISD Datafiles: 183 Non-Attenders from 1985-86 School Year
		  • Excessive absenteeism
		  • Failure of all standard classes
			• Telephone Survey/Mail Survey

	• No Contacts: (N=60)	• Pool of 1418 Presumed Dropouts Resulting in "No Contact"
		  • No phone #
		  • Wrong phone #
		  • Disconnected #
			• Phone Attempt
			• Mail Survey

PARENTS
• Stay-Ins and Dropouts
	• Parents of Stay-Ins: (N=133)
	• Parents of Dropouts: (N=135)
		• Parents Listed on Student Datafile Who Agreed to Participate
		  • One parent from any given household
		  • Included guardians (grandparents, aunts, uncles, etc.)
			• Initial Telephone Contact
			• Individual In-Person Interview

SCHOOL PERSONNEL
• DISD Campus Administrators
	• Principals from Target Campuses:
	  • High School (N=13)
	  • Middle School (N=13)
	  Total (N=26)
		• Target Campuses in High, Medium and Low Strata of Concentration of Hispanic Student Enrollment	

Figure 3
Summary of Phase II Respondents, Sample Sizes and Methods

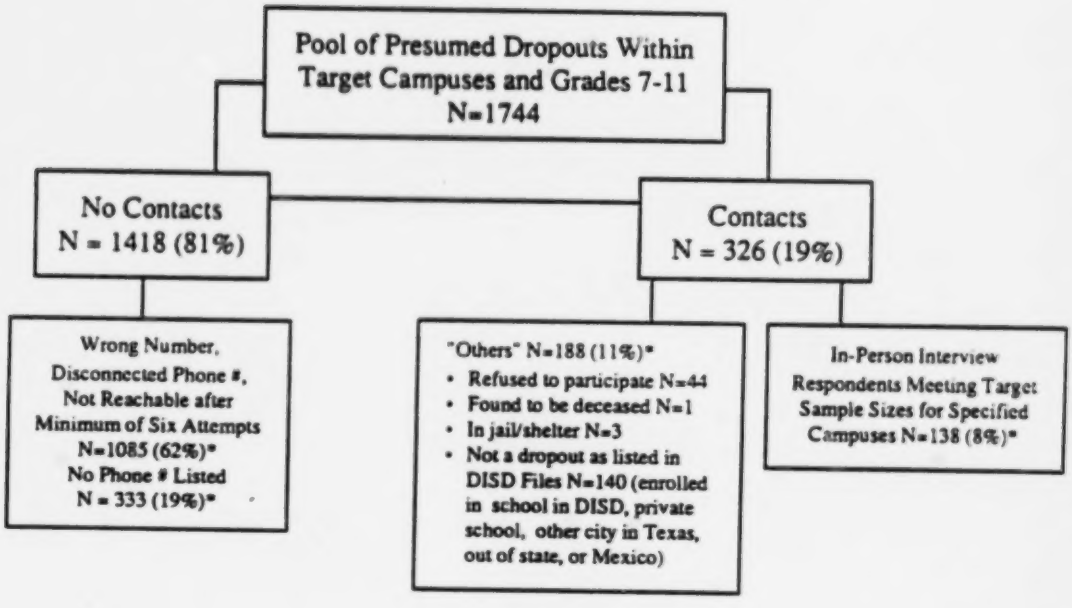
PHASE II Spring 1988			
Respondents	**Sample Size**	**Origin/Method for Drawing Sample**	**Method of Data Collection**
STUDENTS:			
o Dropouts	o Dropouts (N=70) Grade: 7th (N=12) 8th (N=12) 9th (N=29) 10th (N=11) 11th (N= 6)	DISD Datafiles: o Records of Presumed Dropouts from 1986-87 School Year o Stratified Random Sample by Grade Level (Grades 7-11) • Proportion of "X" graders within total population • Eliminated students in file not meeting State definition of dropout • Eliminated students from campuses other than Phase I target campuses	o Initial Telephone Contact o Individual In-Person Interview
	o Dropouts (N=63) o Nonattenders (N=6) o Mailouts (N=3)	o Pool of Phase I Respondents from In-Person interview (N=138) from 1985-1986 School Year o Pool of Phase I Respondents from Non-Attender Telephone/Mail Survey (N=30) o Pool of Phase I Respondents from Mail Surveys to "No Contacts" (N=60)	o Telephone Survey/Interview Mail Survey o Telephone Survey/Interview Mail Survey o Telephone Survey/Interview Mail Survey
o Stay-Ins	o Stay-Ins (N=93) Grade: 7th (N=24) 8th (N=24) 9th (N=23) 10th (N=14) 11th (N= 8)	o DISD Datafiles • 1000 Records of Randomly Selected Hispanic Enrollees During 1986-87 School Year. • Stratified Random Sample by Grade Level (Grades 7-11) • Eliminated students from campuses not included in Phase I Target schools • Calculated proportion of grade level students within total population	o Initial Telephone Contact o Individual In-Person Interview
	o Stay-Ins (N=105)	o Pool of Phase I In-Person Interview Respondents from 1985-86 School Year (N=177)	o Telephone Interview

Figure 3 (continued)
Summary of Phase II Respondents, Sample Sizes and Methods

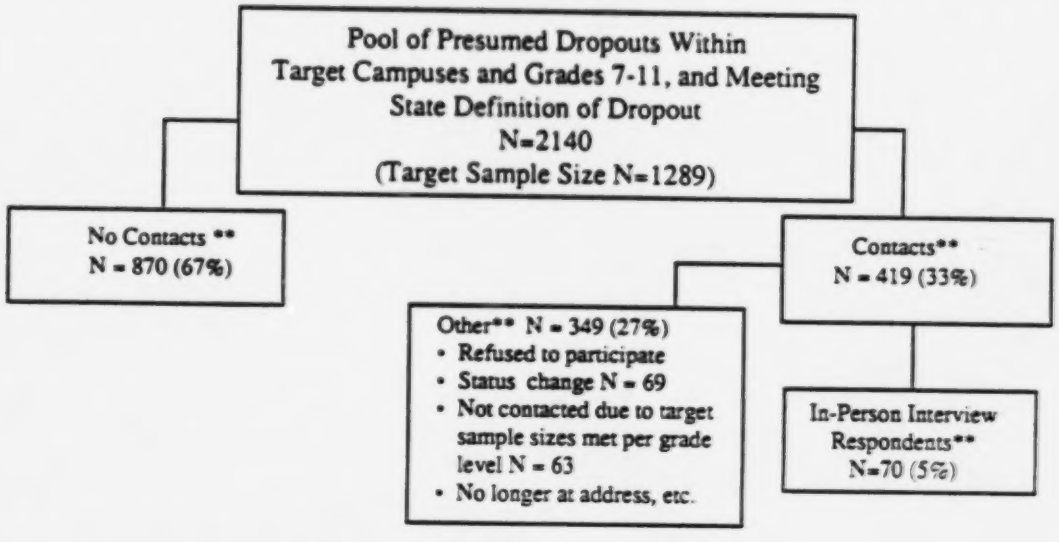
PHASE II Spring 1988			
Respondents	**Sample Size**	**Origin/Method of Drawing Sample**	**Method of Data Collection**
PARENTS			
o Parents of Dropouts	Parents of Dropouts (N=75)	o Parents from Phase II Stratified Random Sample of Presumed Dropouts • Stratified by grade level (7-11) • DISD 1986-1987 school year data files • Parents who agreed to participate	o Telephone Interview
	Parents of Dropouts (N= 5)	o Pool of parent respondents from Phase I In-Person Parent Interviews (N=135) • Originally listed on DISD student data files of presumed dropouts	o Initial Phone Contact o Focus-Group Interview
o Parents of Stay-Ins	Parents of Stay-Ins (N=85)	o Parents from Phase II Stratified Random Sample of Student Enrollees • Stratified by grade level (7-11) • DISD 1986-87 school year data files • Parents who agreed to participate	o Telephone interview
	Parents of Stay-Ins (N= 4)	o Pool of Parent Respondents from Phase I In-Person Interviews (N=133) • Originally listed on DISD student datafiles of student enrollees	o Initial Phone Contact o Focus group interview
SCHOOL PERSONNEL			
o Counselors	o Middle and High School Counselors (N=11)	o Representatives from DISD Target Campuses Having High and Medium Concentrations of Hispanic Students (N=11)	o Structural Group Meeting
o Teachers	o Middle and High School Teachers (N=11)	o Representatives from DISD Target Campuses Having High and Medium Concentrations of Hispanic Students (N=11) • Selected by campus principal	o Structural Group Meeting
o Principals	o Middle and High School Administrators (N=12)	o Representatives from DISD Target Campuses Having High and Medium Concentrations of Hispanic Students (N=12)	

Figure 4
Contact Rate for DISD Hispanic Dropout Study - Phases I and II

Phase I


Pool of Presumed Dropouts Within Target Campuses and Grades 7-11 N=1744
No Contacts N = 1418 (81%)
Contacts N = 326 (19%)
Wrong Number, Disconnected Phone #, Not Reachable after Minimum of Six Attempts N=1085 (62%)*
No Phone # Listed N = 333 (19%)*
"Others" N=188 (11%)*
• Refused to participate N=44
• Found to be deceased N=1
• In jail/shelter N=3
• Not a dropout as listed in DISD Files N=140 (enrolled in school in DISD, private school, other city in Texas, out of state, or Mexico)
In-Person Interview Respondents Meeting Target Sample Sizes for Specified Campuses N=138 (8%)*

Phase II


Pool of Presumed Dropouts Within Target Campuses and Grades 7-11, and Meeting State Definition of Dropout N=2140 (Target Sample Size N=1289)
No Contacts ** N = 870 (67%)
Contacts** N = 419 (33%)
Other** N = 349 (27%)
• Refused to participate
• Status change N = 69
• Not contacted due to target sample sizes met per grade level N = 63
• No longer at address, etc.
In-Person Interview Respondents** N=70 (5%)

* percentage calculated from total N (1744)
** percentage calculated from sample size (N=1289)

PART I: STUDY FINDINGS AND RESULTS

Definition and Calculation of Dropout Rates

Definition of a Dropout

The development of the dropout definition to be used for national, state, or local examination of the issue is the initial key element in the dropout identification and calculation process. On the national level, estimates of the dropout rate utilize non-graduation and non-completion/non-enrollment of high school as indicators of a student dropout (Doss and Sailor, 1987).

On the state level, dropout definitions vary extensively. An examination of state dropout data gathering procedures, conducted for the council of chief state school officers, revealed that almost every state's figures are unique given the variations.

In Texas, H.B. 1010 (passed in May 1987) defines a dropout as follows:

> For purposes of this section a dropout means a student:
>
> (1) who does not hold a high school diploma or its equivalent;
>
> (2) who is absent from the public school in which the student is enrolled for a period of 30 or more consecutive days; and
>
> (3) whose attendance within that period at another private or public school cannot be evidenced.

At the local level, Barber (1984) and numerous other research studies on local dropout definitions concur that there are at least as many different definitions of dropouts as there are school districts.

Calculation of a Dropout Rate

To a great extent, dropout rate variations can be attributed to variances in the factors used in the computation formula. Although the mathematical process can be simplified to provide for the division of (a) the number of students to be defined as dropouts (according to the definition used), by (b) the pool of students from which the dropouts originated [displayed mathematically as a/b = r, where r equals the dropout], manipulation of either the numerator or denominator produces great variances in the outcome figure generated.

According to Morrow (1986), the critical manipulable factors involved in the calculation of dropout rates are:

(1) the time frame during which the number of students is counted,

(2) the range of grade levels included in the dropout rate calculation, and

(3) the student accounting procedures used by the district (e.g., average daily attendance versus average membership).

Time Frame

With respect to time frames, two major types of frames are used to generate dropout rates. These include: (1) annual rates and (2) cohort rates. Annual rates usually involve analysis of dropout rates for a single year. In this type of calculation, the numerator involves determining a district dropout rate for all (or/specific) grade level(s) and dividing the total by the total population for those grade levels (or in the case of a specific grade, all students at the grade level analyzed).

Calculation of a cohort rate, on the other hand, involves tracking a specific group or class of students over a multiple-year period and cumulatively totaling the number of dropouts for the group being analyzed.

The time frame is indeed an important consideration in dropout rate calculations. The decision of which to use is essentially reflective of two views of the issue, one a vertical tabulation across grades for a specific year, the other a longitudinal measure of district "holding power" for a particular group of students.

However, according to Morrow's (1986) research and related research efforts, the cohort dropout rate produces a more accurate picture of the success and failure rate of a district's school program.

Range of Grade Levels

Another manipulable factor in calculating dropout rates relates to the grade spans included in the dropout calculation. As a general rule, the greater the span of grades incorporated, the lower the resulting dropout rate generated.

The use of a broad range of grades in calculating the rate can be misleading since the incidence of dropping out is often concentrated in a portion of the population pool. While inclusion of grades K-12 implies that there is a comparable propensity for dropping out at all grade levels included, research indicates that the greatest proportion of the dropout pool is distributed between grades 7 to 12.

Student Accounting Procedures

The third major manipulable factor, student accounting procedures, relates to the fact that use of average daily membership, which by definition will produce a lower rate than average daily attendance (which constitutes a subset of membership), can also affect the outcome of the calculation of dropout statistics.

The DISD Dropout Rate

In Dallas ISD, the dropout definition issue has been given extensive consideration. Review of DISD research on the dropout issue reflects that local definitions have evolved as the staff has worked with the issue and incorporated refinements which take into account factors left unaddressed in earlier dropout estimation efforts. DISD was required to submit dropout statistics for the 1987-1988 school year to the Texas Education Agency. Data formed part of the Public Education Information Management System and were designed to conform to the H.B. 1010 definition presented above. These data indicate that 7,619 (12.3%) students dropped out of the DISD during the 1987-1988 school year; (2,890 students were "known dropouts" whereas 4,729 were "possible dropouts," i.e., withdrew for unknown reasons). The reported attrition from the class of 1988 (Grade 7, '82) was 5,751 (45.3%) (DISD, 1988).

Survey Results: Introduction

This section reviews the current literature relevant to each research question, and discusses the major findings and results of this study. Summary tables highlighting the results are also included.

Research Question 1: ***What student and parent characteristics affect a students' propensity to stay in or drop out of school?***

A variety of demographic characteristics have been associated with Hispanic youth who leave school before graduating. School leavers are more likely to be older than average students (Ekstrom et al., 1986; Massachusetts Advocacy Center and the Center for Early Adolescence, 1988) and more likely to be female (Ekstrom et al., 1986; Boston Public School, 1986). School leavers are also less likely to live with both natural parents (Hispanic Education Task Force and Felice, 1986; Ochoa et al., 1987; Velez and Aspira of America, Inc., 1987) and their parents are less likely to have completed high school (First, 1986; Hispanic Education Task Force and Felice, 1986, Rumberger, 1987; Gainer and Sehgal, 1987). Parents of school leavers have low occupational attainment, and fathers of school leavers are more likely to be blue collar and unskilled workers (Hispanic Education Task Force and Felice, 1986; Rumberger, 1987). Youth who come from large families are also more likely to leave school before graduation (Catterall, 1987; Massachusetts Advocacy Center and the Center for Early Adolescence, 1988).

Results of this study showed similar patterns. School leavers tended to be older than average; parents of school leavers were less likely than parents of school attenders to be high school graduates; parents of school leavers had low occupational attainment, and school attenders were more likely than school leavers to have both parents in the home. However, results of the study also showed that although the majority of both school leavers and school attenders were members of middle size families (between four and six people in the home), more school leavers were members of small families (three or less people in the home) and more school attenders were members of large families (seven or more people in the home).

Study Results

A. Age

* Student leavers tended to be older than school attenders.

B. Birthplace and Length of Residence

* The majority of all students were born in the U.S.

* The majority of parents of school attenders were born outside the U.S.

C. PARENTS' EDUCATION

* A majority of all students had parents who did not graduate from high school, but the incidence was higher for parents of school leavers.

D. EMPLOYMENT

* A majority of all parents were employed.

E. HOUSEHOLD CHARACTERISTICS

* More student attenders had 7 or more people living in the home and more student leavers have 3 or less.
* School leavers had their own children in the home.

Research Question 2: ***What is the relationship between language and whether or not a student stays enrolled in school?***

Language is another variable which has been related to non-completion of high school although results on the relationship between language and dropping out "are highly contradictory" (Ochoa et al., 1987, p.15). Studies have shown that dropout rates are higher for children from families who speak a language other than English in the home (Rumberger, 1987; San Diego City Schools, 1987; Kyle, 1984). Baral (1977) found home usage of the English language as the best predictor of academic achievement, and Catterall (1987) indicates that researchers have found non-English speaking dominance to be an independent predictor of non-completion of high school. Valverde (1987), in a comparative study of Hispanic high school leavers and high school graduates, found notable differences between groups; results showed school leavers were overwhelmingly native-born English speakers and were <u>not</u> classified as limited English proficient.

Results of this study did not show that speaking a language other than English in the home increased a student's chances of leaving school. Conversely, the study showed that self-reported bilingualism contributed to a student's chances of remaining in school as did Spanish as a first language. The study did find that significantly more school attenders spoke English with friends and at school and that problems with reading or writing English well increased the chances of a student leaving school.

Youth Language Results

* Almost 40 percent of school leavers and school attenders indicated they spoke both English and Spanish at home.

* The majority of school leavers and school attenders indicated they spoke English with friends and at school; however, significantly more school attenders said they spoke English with friends and at school.

* The majority of school leavers and school attenders reported both English and Spanish were usually or always spoken at home.

* The majority of parents indicated speaking Spanish in the home.

Language Encouragement

* The majority of school leavers and school attenders were always encouraged to learn English.

* The majority of school leavers and school attenders were usually or always encouraged to learn Spanish; however, significantly more school attenders were always encouraged to learn Spanish.

* The majority of school leavers and school attenders were usually or always encouraged to become bilingual.

* The majority of school leavers and school attenders indicated their first language spoken was Spanish.

Language Proficiency

* The majority of school leavers and school attenders indicated understanding and speaking Spanish well or very well.

* The majority of school leavers and school attenders indicated reading and writing Spanish not very well or not at all.

* The majority of school leavers and school attenders had a total Spanish proficiency score of well or very well.

* The majority of school leavers and school attenders indicated understanding, speaking, reading, and writing English very well; however, significantly more school leavers indicated they did not read or write English very well.

* The majority of school leavers and school attenders had a total English proficiency score of very well.

SS	Student Leavers
SA	Student Attenders
•	No Data Available

TABLE 1
Student and Parent Characteristics Which Affect A Student's Propensity To Remain In or Drop Out of School By Survey and Year

	Year 1 (Phase I) In-Person				Year 2 (Phase II) Student Telephone				Year 2 (Phase II) In-Person				Year 2 (Phase II) Parent Telephone			
	SL (N=138)		SA (N=177)		SL (N=72)		SA (N=105)		SL (N=70)		SA (N=91)		SL (N=75)		SA (N=85)	
	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)
Youth's Birthplace																
U.S.	106	77.0	143	81.0	•		•		•		•		47	63.0	66	78.0
Outside U.S.	32	23.0	34	19.0	•		•		•		•		28	37.0	19	22.0
Mother's Birthplace																
U.S.	80	58.0	73	41.0	44	62.0	43	40.2	30	44.0	35	38.0	•		•	
Outside U.S.	57	42.0	10	6.0	27	38.0	64	59.8	38	56.0	58	62.0	•		•	
Years Mother Has Lived In U.S. If Foreign-born																
1 - 9 Years	•		•		7	10.0	5	4.9	•		•		•		•	
10 + Years	•		•		13	18.6	47	45.6	•		•		•		•	
High School Graduate:																
Mother: Yes	16	12.0	31	18.0	9	13.8	32	30.2	6	11.0	20	26.0	•		•	
No	93	68.0	99	57.0	56	86.2	44	69.8	50	89.0	56	74.0	•		•	
Father: Yes	20	14.0	31	18.0	12	19.0	31	31.6	8	16.0	18	29.0	•		•	
No	81	59.0	87	49.0	51	81.0	67	68.4	43	84.0	45	71.0	•		•	
Parents' Employment Status:																
Mother: Yes	65	49.0	90	51.0	•		•		33	53.0	57	61.0	•		•	
No	68	51.0	87	49.0	•		•		22	36.0	28	30.0	•		•	
Father: Yes	109	82.0	132	85.0	•		•		46	85.0	77	95.0	•		•	
No	24	18.0	23	15.0	•		•		6	11.0	4	5.0	•		•	
Head of Household																
Mother	•		•		•		•		•		•		10	13.3	12	14.1
Father/Stepfather	•		•		•		•		•		•		57	76.0	73	85.9
Grandparents	•		•		•		•		•		•		5	6.7	0	0.0
Other/Relative	•		•		•		•		•		•		3	4.0	0	0.0

SS	Student Leavers
SA	Student Attenders
•	No Data Available

TABLE I (continued)
Student and Parent Characteristics Which Affect A Student's Propensity To Remain In or Drop Out of School By Survey and Year

	Year 1 (Phase I) In-Person				Year 2 (Phase II) Student Telephone				Year 2 (Phase II) In-Person				Year 2 (Phase II) Parent Telephone			
	SL (N=138)		SA (N=177)		SL (N=72)		SA (N=105)		SL (N=70)		SA (N=93)		SL (N=75)		SA (N=85)	
	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)
Parents In Home																
Mother: Yes	98	85.0	166	96.0	•		•		59	84.0	88	95.0	•		•	
No	17	15.0	7	4.0	•		•		11	16.0	5	5.0	•		•	
Father: Yes	84	75.0	135	85.0	•		•		46	66.0	71	76.0	•		•	
No	28	25.0	23	15.0	•		•		24	34.0	22	24.0	•		•	
Children of Youth in Home																
Yes	34	47.0	3	4.0	•		•		8	12.0	1	1.0	14	18.7	2	2.4
No	39	53.0	77	96.0	•		•		61	88.0	89	99.0	61	81.3	82	97.6
Youth's Current Status:																
Re-enrolled In School																
Yes	•		•		•		•		•		•		6	8.0		N/A
No	•		•		•		•		•		•		69	92.0		N/A
Earned A GED																
Yes	•		•		•		•		•		•		7	9.3		N/A
No	•		•		•		•		•		•		68	90.7		N/A
Job-Training Program																
Yes	•		•		•		•		•		•		9	12.0		N/A
No	•		•		•		•		•		•		66	88.0		N/A
Currently Working																
Yes	•		•		•		•		•		•		35	47.3	12	14.5
No	•		•		•		•		•		•		39	52.7	71	85.5
Staying Home																
Yes	•		•		•		•		•		•		24	32.0	41	50.0
No	•		•		•		•		•		•		49	67.1	41	50.0
Currently Married																
Yes	•		•		•		•		•		•		16	21.3	1	2.4
No	•		•		•		•		•		•		59	78.7	80	96.4

SS	Student Leavers
SA	Student Attenders
•	No Data Available

TABLE 1 (continued)
Student and Parent Characteristics Which Affect A Student's Propensity To Remain In or Drop Out of School By Survey and Year

	Year 1 (Phase I) In-Person				Year 2 (Phase II) Student Telephone				Year 2 (Phase II) In-Person				Year 2 (Phase II) Parent Telephone			
	SL (N=138)		SA (N=177)		SL (N=72)		SA (N=105)		SL (N=70)		SA (N=93)		SL (N=75)		SA (N=85)	
	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)
Currently A Parent																
Yes	•		•		•		•		•		•		14	18.7	2	2.4
No	•		•		•		•		•		•		61	81.3	82	97.6

Note: Detail may not add to 100.0 percent because of rounding and the exclusion of certain items (e.g., "other").

SS	Student Leavers
SA	Student Attenders
•	No Data Available

TABLE 2
Language Characteristics Which Affect A Student's Propensity to Remain In Or Drop out of School By Survey and Year

	Year 1 (Phase I) In-Person				Year 2 (Phase II) Student Telephone				Year 2 (Phase II) In-Person				Year 2 (Phase II) Parent Telephone			
	SL (N=138)		SA (N=177)		SL (N=72)		SA (N=105)		SL (N=70)		SA (N=93)		SL (N=75)		SA (N=85)	
	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)
Language Youth Speaks At Home																
English	68	50.0	71	40.0	22	30.6	35	33.0	16	23.0	28	30.0	•		•	
Spanish	19	14.0	31	18.0	25	34.7	37	34.9	20	29.0	29	32.0	•		•	
Both	48	36.0	74	42.0	25	34.7	34	32.1	34	49.0	35	38.0	•		•	
Encouraged to Learn Both Spanish and English																
Never	11	8.0	11	7.0		•		•	18	26.0	12	13.0	•		•	
Rarely	28	21.0	18	12.0		•		•	8	11.0	11	12.0	•		•	
Usually	35	26.0	26	17.0		•		•	9	13.0	27	29.0	•		•	
Always	62	47.0	96	64.0		•		•	35	50.0	43	46.0	•		•	
First Language Spoken																
English	58	42.0	65	37.0	31	43.1	39	36.4	14	20.0	25	27.0	•		•	
Spanish	61	44.0	106	60.0	35	48.6	64	59.8	48	69.0	61	66.0	•		•	
Both	16	12.0	4	2.0	6	8.3	4	3.7	8	11.0	6	6.0	•		•	
Read English																
Not At All		•		•	1	1.4	0	0.0	2	3.0	0	0.0	•		•	
Not Very Well		•		•	7	9.7	1	0.9	13	19.0	2	2.0	•		•	
Well		•		•	16	22.2	22	20.6	16	23.0	27	29.0	•		•	
Very Well		•		•	48	66.7	84	78.5	39	56.0	64	69.0	•		•	
Write English																
Not At All		•		•	1	1.4	0	0.0	3	4.0	0	0.0	•		•	
Not Very Well		•		•	8	11.1	3	2.8	13	19.0	2	2.0	•		•	
Well		•		•	14	19.4	26	24.3	17	24.0	25	27.0	•		•	
Very Well		•		•	49	68.1	78	72.9	37	53.0	66	71.0	•		•	

Research Question 3: ***Do student attitudes and perceptions play a role in determining whether or not a student stays in or drops out of school?***

Research studies have shown that the major reasons that youth leave school before graduating are a dislike or discontentment with school (Gainer and Sehgal, 1987; Ochoa et al., 1987; Massachusetts Advocacy Center and the Center for Early Adolescence, 1988), dissatisfaction with progress in school (Merchant, 1987; Massachusetts Advocacy Center and the Center for Early Adolescence, 1988), economic need (Frey, 1986; Rumberger, 1987; Massachusetts Advocacy Center and the Center for Early Adolescence, 1988), marriage and pregnancy (Fine, 1985; Frey, 1986; Bickel et al., 1986; Gainer and Sehgal, 1987), and problems with school personnel (Bickel et al., 1986; San Diego City Schools, 1987; Massachusetts Advocacy Center and the Center for Early Adolescence, 1988). Youth are also more likely to leave school during academic and personal stress points (NYC Board of Education, n.d.) School leavers are also more likely to perceive discipline systems and administration as ineffective and unfair (Catterall, 1987; Bickel et al., 1986).

A positive self-concept has been shown to be strongly related to completion of high school, and studies indicate that school leavers have lower self-esteem than school attenders, are less satisfied with themselves, and have a lower sense of control over their future (Catterall, 1987; Merchant, 1987; Ochoa et al., 1987).

Findings from this study corroborated current literature findings. School leavers reported working, pregnancy, family problems, and problems with school personnel as the main reasons for leaving school. Students who had a lower self-concept and a more external locus of control, problems with school personnel, and felt teachers disliked Hispanics had a greater chance of leaving school. Students who left school also felt there were too many White and Black students.

Contrary to previous studies, the majority of both school leavers and school attenders felt it was important to finish high school and had overall positive self-esteem.

Study Results

Youth's Likes and Dislikes

* School leavers and school attenders tend to enjoy socializing and extracurricular activities.
* School leavers tend to dislike teachers, homework, and core courses.

Helps and Hindrances

* Significantly more school attenders than school leavers found family support and good study skills as helping them do well in school.

* Peer pressure was clearly a hindrance for both school leavers and school attenders.

* Significantly more school leavers than school attenders found the lack of teacher support as hindering them in school.

* The majority of parents of school leavers and school attenders felt that the major helping and/or hindering factors were in the classroom.

Importance of Finishing High School

* The majority of both school leavers and school attenders felt it was important to finish high school. However, a greater percentage of school leavers than school attenders did not feel it was important to finish high school and believed their parents felt the same.

* The majority of all parents felt finishing high school was necessary for their children's success.

Leaving School: First Thoughts and Reasons

* Significantly more school leavers thought about leaving school than did school attenders. The majority of school leavers thought about leaving school in the seventh and/or ninth grades.

* School leavers reported working, pregnancy, family problems, and problems with school personnel as the main reasons for leaving school.

* School attenders reported work and problems with school personnel as reasons for leaving school if they were to leave school.

* School attenders tended to feel there was no reason to leave school.

Ethnic Composition

* The majority of school leavers and school attenders felt that there were enough Hispanic and Black students and White and Black teachers.

* The majority of parents of school leavers and school attenders felt that there were not enough Hispanic teachers.

Students' Perceptions of School Personnel

* Significantly fewer school leavers liked school administrators, although the majority of all respondents liked teachers, counselors, and administrators.

* The majority of both school leavers and school attenders felt youth liked good students, Hispanic students, athletes, Blacks, polite students, and Whites; however, significantly fewer school leavers liked good students, athletes, Blacks, and Whites.

* The majority of school attenders and most school leavers disliked troublemakers and gang members. However, significantly more school leavers liked troublemakers, gang members, and dropouts.

* The majority of school attenders and school leavers felt that teachers liked good students, Hispanic students, athletes, Black students, polite students, and Whites; however, significantly more school leavers felt that teachers were indifferent to good students and athletes.

* The majority of school leavers and school attenders felt that teachers disliked troublemakers, gang members, and dropouts.

* Although the majority of school leavers and school attenders had a positive perception of teachers and administrators, significantly fewer school leavers felt that teachers and administrators encouraged them.

* Similarly, significantly fewer school leavers felt that teachers thought they were well behaved and that they did well in their studies.

* Significantly fewer school leavers felt that administrators were in control and cared about them (school leavers).

Parents' Perception of School

* The majority of parents of school leavers indicated they could not have done something differently to help keep the student in school.

Self-Esteem and Mastery

* The majority of school leavers and school attenders scored positively on all stems (subscales) of the self-esteem scale. However, significantly more school attenders reported feeling satisfied with themselves.

* The majority of school leavers and school attenders had overall positive self-esteem.

* The majority of parents of school leavers and school attenders scored positively on all stems of the self-esteem scale except for Stem VI; about two-thirds of all parents reported feeling "useless" and "no good".

* The majority of parents of school leavers and school attenders had overall positive self-esteem.

* The majority of school leavers and school attenders indicated having internal control or mastery over their lives; however, significantly more school leavers felt they could not change the important things in their life.

* Significantly more school attenders felt internal control or mastery over their lives.

* The majority of parents of school leavers and school attenders indicated having internal control or mastery over their lives; however, more parents of school attenders felt internal control or mastery over their lives.

SS	Student Leavers
SA	Student Attenders
•	No Data Available

TABLE 3
Students' Attitudes and Perceptions Which Affect Whether or Not A Student Remains in School By Survey and Year

	Year 1 (Phase I) In Person				Year 2 (Phase II) Student Telephone				Year 2 (Phase II) In Person				Year 2 (Phase II) Parent Telephone			
	SL (N-138)		SA (N-177)		SL (N-72)		SA (N-105)		SL (N-70)		SA (N-93)		SL (N-75)		SA (N-85)	
	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)
What Helped Youth Do Well In School																
Teacher Support	18	14.0	25	13.0	•		•		21	30.0	19	20.0	•		•	
Family Support	17	13.0	27	16.0	•		•		9	13.0	26	28.0	•		•	
Peer Support	18	14.0	18	10.0	•		•		7	10.0	6	6.0	•		•	
Study Skills	20	15.0	60	34.0	•		•		5	7.0	10	11.0	•		•	
What Hindered Youth In School																
Peer Pressure	40	31.0	57	33.0	•		•		19	27.0	21	23.0	•		•	
No Teacher Support	26	20.0	11	6.0	•		•		9	13.0	5	5.0	•		•	
Poor Study Skills	12	9.0	28	16.0	•		•		1	1.0	7	8.0	•		•	
Important To Finish High School																
Yes		•		•	60	83.0	95	90.0	54	77.0	91	98.0	•		•	
No		•		•	9	12.0	4	4.0	15	21.0	1	1.0	•		•	
Do Students Think Their Parents Believe It Is Important That They Finish High School?																
Yes		•		•		•		•	62	89.0	91	98.0	•		•	
No		•		•		•		•	7	10.0	2	2.0	•		•	
Grade First Thought About Leaving School																
5th		•		•		•		•	1	1.0	0	0.0	•		•	
6th		•		•		•		•	2	3.0	0	0.0	•		•	
7th		•		•		•		•	18	26.0	5	5.0	•		•	
8th		•		•		•		•	6	9.0	4	4.0	•		•	
9th		•		•		•		•	28	41.0	5	5.0	•		•	
10th		•		•		•		•	9	13.0	3	3.0	•		•	
11th		•		•		•		•	4	6.0	4	4.0	•		•	
Did not think about leaving		•		•		•		•	1	1.0	72	77.0	•		•	

SS	Student Leavers
SA	Student Attenders
•	No Data Available

TABLE 3 (continued)
Students' Attitudes and Perceptions Which Affect Whether or Not A Student Remains In School By Survey and Year

	Year 1 (Phase I) In-Person				Year 2 (Phase II) Student Telephone				Year 2 (Phase II) In-Person				Year 2 (Phase II) Parent Telephone			
	SL (N=138)		SA (N=177)		SL (N=72)		SA (N=105)		SL (N=70)		SA (N=93)		SL (N=75)		SA (N=85)	
	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)
Main Reason Wanted To Leave																
School Was Too Hard		•		•	6	8.0	1	1.0	11	16.0	7	8.0	•		•	
To Work		•		•	6	8.0	38	36.0	8	11.0	2	2.0	•		•	
Main Reason For Leaving																
To Work	10	7.0	14	8.0	•		•		10	15.0	21	23.0	•		•	
Pregnant	21	15.0	7	4.0	•		•		10	15.0	8	9.0	•		•	
Family Problems	3	2.0	7	4.0	•		•		4	6.0	10	11.0	•		•	
Problems With School Personnel	27	20.0	18	10.0	•		•		•		•		•		•	
Youth Likes																
Teachers	132	96.0	175	99.0	•		•		68	99.0	92	100.0	•		•	
Counselors	110	83.0	155	93.0	•		•		53	88.0	85	93.0	•		•	
Administrators	93	68.0	148	87.0	•		•		53	77.0	84	92.0	•		•	
Teachers Dislike																
Hispanic Students	23	17.0	8	5.0	•		•		15	21.0	7	8.0	•		•	
Troublemakers	95	69.0	135	79.0	•		•		63	90.0	79	86.0	•		•	
Athletes	13	9.0	1	1.0	•		•		0	0.0	4	4.0	•		•	
Blacks	•		•		•		•		6	9.0	9	10.0	•		•	
Teachers Like																
Good Students	123	91.0	168	98.0	•		•		69	99.0	93	100.0	•		•	
Polite Students	117	87.0	163	95.0	•		•		65	96.0	92	99.0	•		•	
Gang Members	25	18.0	15	9.0	•		•		2	3.0	3	3.0	•		•	
Dropouts	26	19.0	12	7.0	•		•		12	18.0	10	11.0	•		•	
Not Enough																
Hispanic Students	43	31.0	49	28.0	•		•		15	22.0	23	25.0	•		•	
White Students	46	33.0	77	44.0	•		•		27	39.0	47	50.0	•		•	
Black Students	14	10.0	13	7.0	•		•		19	28.0	13	14.0	•		•	
Hispanic Teachers	92	67.0	116	66.0	•		•		60	87.0	70	76.0	•		•	
White Teachers	21	15.0	23	13.0	•		•		6	9.0	15	16.0	•		•	
Black Teachers	20	14.0	32	18.0	•		•		17	24.0	17	18.0	•		•	

SS	Student Leavers
SA	Student Attenders
•	No Data Available

TABLE 3 (continued)
Students' Attitudes and Perceptions Which Affect Whether or Not A Student Remains In School By Survey and Year

	Year 1 (Phase I) In-Person				Year 2 (Phase II) Student Telephone				Year 2 (Phase II) In-Person				Year 2 (Phase II) Parent Telephone			
	SL (N-138)		SA (N-177)		SL (N-72)		SA (N-105)		SL (N-70)		SA (N-93)		SL (N-75)		SA (N-85)	
	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)
Too Many																
Hispanic Students	10	7.0	19	11.0	•		•		17	25.0	13	14.0	•		•	
White Students	18	13.0	9	5.0	•		•		8	12.0	4	4.0	•		•	
Black Students	39	28.0	42	24.0	•		•		26	38.0	30	33.0	•		•	
Hispanic Teachers	1	1.0	2	1.0	•		•		1	1.0	0	0.0	•		•	
White Teachers	29	21.0	33	19.0	•		•		18	26.0	15	16.0	•		•	
Black Teachers	36	26.0	21	12.0	•		•		12	17.0	17	18.0	•		•	

Research Question 4: ***What is the relationship between participation in in-school activities and out-of-school activities, and staying in or dropping out of school?***

In-school and out-of-school participation is an important ingredient of school success and studies have shown that Hispanic school leavers are less likely to participate in any school activity (Catterall, 1987; Hispanic Education Task Force and Felice, 1986; Massachusetts Advocacy Center and the Center for Adolescence, 1988). Velez (1987), in his study of Hispanic dropouts, found that participation in extra-curricular activities decreases the chances of Chicano and Puerto Rican youth leaving school whereas it increases the chances of Cuban youth leaving school. Along with the lack of student participation there also exists a lack of parental participation in the school. According to the Illinois State Task Force (1985), "parental participation in school advisory councils and PTA's in predominantly Hispanic schools is almost nonexistent" (p.3). Catterall (1987) also found that parents of school leavers spend less time monitoring their children both in and out of school.

This study's findings also show that involvement in school/community and out-of-school activities increase a student's chances of remaining in school, as does encouragement from their parents to participate in such activities and parent involvement in school programs.

Contrary to previous research, the majority of both school leavers and school attenders participated in and were encouraged by their parent to participate in in-school activities.

Study Results

YOUTH

* The majority of school leavers and school attenders participated in and were encouraged by their parents to participate in school activities.
* School leavers and school attenders tended to participate in sports activities in school.
* Significantly fewer school leavers participated in leadership activities and out-of-school activities.

PARENTS

* Parents of school attenders tended to visit the school for school awards; significantly more parents of school leavers tended to visit for discipline problems or never visited at all.
* The majority of parents felt that they would have visited the school more if it were facilitated.
* Only about half of all parents felt comfortable during their visits to school.

SS	Student Leavers
SA	Student Attenders
•	No Data Available

TABLE 4
The Effects of Leadership and Participation On A Student's Propensity To Remain In or Drop Out of School By Survey and Year

	Year 1 (Phase I) In-Person				Year 2 (Phase II) Student Telephone				Year 2 (Phase II) In-Person				Year 2 (Phase II) Parent Telephone			
	SL (N-138)		SA (N-177)		SL (N-72)		SA (N-105)		SL (N-70)		SA (N-93)		SL (N-75)		SA (N-85)	
	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)
Participation																
Middle School																
Yes	•		•		56	8.0	72	69.0	39	56.0	63	68.0				
No	•		•		13	18.0	31	30.0	31	44.0	30	32.0				
High School																
Yes	•		•		40	62.5	73	69.5	41	59.0	68	73.0				
No	•		•		24	37.5	32	30.5	29	41.0	25	27.0				
Parents Would Visit School More Often If:																
School Allowed It	•		•		•	•	37	53.0	55	62.0	•	•				
Had More Time	•		•		•		•		57	83.0	82	90.0				
Staff Spoke Spanish	•		•		•		•		43	61.0	61	66.0				
Convenient Meeting Times	•		•		•		•		59	86.0	85	91.0				
Interested	•		•		•		•		60	86.0	70	85.0				
Transportation	•		•		•		•		39	56.0	46	50.0				
Parents Visited School 5 Times Or More For:																
Awards	•		•		•		•		•		•		8	10.7	16	18.8
School Programs	•		•		•		•		•		•		8	10.7	20	23.5
Teacher Meetings	•		•		•		•		•		•		16	21.3	23	27.4
Discipline Problems	•		•		•		•		•		•		11	14.7	3	3.7
Parent Meetings	•		•		•		•		•		•		13	17.3	20	23.5
Too Many Visits For:																
Awards	•		•		•		•		•		•		2	2.7	5	5.9
School Programs	•		•		•		•		•		•		2	2.7	3	3.5
Teacher Meetings	•		•		•		•		•		•		2	2.7	2	2.4
Discipline Problems	•		•		•		•		•		•		7	9.3	0	0.0
Parent Meetings	•		•		•		•		•		•		2	2.7	4	4.7

Research Question 5: ***What is the relationship between schooling history and dropping out of school?***

Research studies have identified academic performance as a major risk factor for dropping out of school (Catterall, 1987; Institute for Educational Leadership, 1986a); school leavers are more likely to have lower school grades (Valverde, 1987; Bickel et al., 1986; Ekstrom et al., 1986). Students' chances of dropping out are increased if they experience repeated failure (Massachusetts Advocacy Center and the Center for Early Adolescence, 1988). School leavers are more likely to have been retained in a grade at least once (Gainer and Sehgal, 1987; Catterall, 1987; Institute for Educational Leadership, 1986a; Massachusetts Advocacy Center and the Center for Early Adolescence, 1988). Irregular attendance and truancy are also strong indicators of potential dropouts (Catterall, 1987; San Diego City Schools, 1987; Ochoa et al, 1987). School leavers also experience more disciplinary problems (Bickel et al, 1986; California State Department of Education, n.d.; Gainer and Sehgal, 1987), are generally more mobile than other students (California State Department of Education, n.d.), and also tend to work more hours per week than their counterparts.

This study's findings support the literature related to this area. Frequent disciplinary referrals, grade retention, high absenteeism, frequent school mobility, and working while in school all contribute to a student's chances of leaving school.

Study Results

Mobility

* The majority of school leavers and school attenders reported that they never changed schools at the elementary, middle, or high school levels as a result of family mobility.

* Of those youth who reported changing schools during at least one of the schooling levels, more were school leavers.

Work

* The majority of youth did not hold a job while in school. However, of those youth who worked while in school, school leavers were twice as likely to work compared to school attenders.

* The majority of school leavers and school attenders reported having service maintenance-type jobs and working between 16 and 40 hours per week while in school. However, significantly more school leavers worked between 16 and 40 hours per week than did school attenders.

* Significantly more school attenders than school leavers reported working less than 15 hours per week.

* Significantly more school attenders than school leavers reported working for spending money as a reason for having a job while still in school, whereas significantly more school leavers reported working to help out with home expenses.

* School attenders tended to earn higher wages than school leavers.

Grades and Retention

* The majority of school leavers and school attenders reported having earned passing grades in elementary, middle, and high school.

* Of those youth indicating failing grades in the middle and high school levels, significantly more school leavers reported having earned failing grades compared to school attenders.

* Significantly more school leavers than school attenders reported having repeated a grade during their schooling years.

* The majority of school leavers indicated that they had repeated a grade.

* Significantly more school leavers were retained at the middle and high school levels compared to school attenders.

* More school leavers than school attenders tended to be retained at the elementary school level.

* More school leavers tended to repeat a grade more than once compared to school attenders.

* Significantly more school leavers than school attenders reported having had frequent disciplinary problems.

Absenteeism

* Significantly more school attenders were absent between 0 and 5 days compared to school leavers; significantly more school leavers were absent more than 11 days.

* Significantly more school attenders reported being absent due to illness; significantly more school leavers reported being absent due to feeling out of place, disliking school, and boring classes.

Early Schooling

* The majority of all respondents indicated attendance in kindergarten. However, significantly more school attenders indicated attendance in nursery school as compared to school leavers.

SS	Student Leavers
SA	Student Attenders
•	No Data Available

TABLE 5
The Effects of Schooling History On A Student's Propensity To Remain In or Drop Out of School By Survey and Year

	Year 1 (Phase I) In-Person				Year 2 (Phase II) Student Telephone				Year 2 (Phase II) In-Person				Year 2 (Phase II) Parent Telephone			
	SL (N=138)		SA (N=177)		SL (N=72)		SA (N=105)		SL (N=70)		SA (N=93)		SL (N=75)		SA (N=85)	
	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)
Times Changed Middle School																
Never	81	59.0	152	86.0	65	91.5	95	88.8	55	78.6	83	89.2	64	85.3	81	95.3
1 - 2 Times	46	33.0	21	12.0	5	7.0	8	7.5	12	17.1	10	10.8	11	14.7	4	4.7
3 or More Times	11	8.0	4	2.0	1	1.4	4	3.7	3	4.3	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Repeated A Grade																
Yes	79	62.0	74	43.0		•		•	55	78.6	33	35.5		•		•
No	49	38.0	97	57.0		•		•	15	28.4	60	64.5		•		•
Disciplinary Action (3 or more times in school year):																
Sent To Office	48	43.0	49	28.0		•		•	28	40.0	19	20.4		•		•
Parents Asked To School	30	27.0	9	5.0		•		•	16	22.9	9	9.7		•		•
In-House Suspension	15	13.0	9	5.0		•		•	15	21.7	3	3.2		•		•
Suspended	13	12.0	3	2.0		•		•	4	5.7	1	1.1		•		•
Expelled	6	5.0	1	1.0		•		•	1	1.4	0	0.0		•		•
Worked While In School																
Yes		•		•	33	45.8	29	27.4	32	45.7	22	23.7		•		•
No		•		•	39	54.2	77	72.6	38	54.3	71	76.3		•		•
Reason For Working:																
For Spending Money		•		•		•		•	14	20.0	15	16.0		•		•
Help With Home		•		•		•		•	11	16.0	4	4.0		•		•
Expenses		•		•		•		•	2	3.0	0	0.0		•		•
Support Own Family		•		•		•		•	1	1.0	1	1.0		•		•
School Expenses																
Hours Worked Per Week																
Less Than 16 Hours		•		•	6	8.0	9	9.0	3	4.0	8	9.0		•		•
16 - 40 Hours		•		•	26	36.0	20	19.0	27	39.0	14	15.0		•		•
More Than 40 Hours		•		•	1	1.0	0	0.0	2	3.0	0	0.0		•		•

SS	Student Leavers
SA	Student Attenders
•	No Data Available

TABLE 5 (continued)
The Effects of Schooling History On A Student's Propensity To Remain In or Drop Out of School By Survey and Year

	Year 1 (Phase I) In-Person				Year 2 (Phase II) Student Telephone				Year 2 (Phase II) In-Person				Year 2 (Phase II) Parent Telephone			
	SL (N=138)		SA (N=177)		SL (N=72)		SA (N=105)		SL (N=70)		SA (N=93)		SL (N=75)		SA (N=85)	
	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)
Absences Last School Year																
0 - 5 Days	25	18.0	74	42.0	•		•		15	21.4	56	60.2	•		•	
6 - 10 Days	20	15.0	53	30.0	•		•		16	22.9	21	22.6	•		•	
More Than 11 Days	79	58.0	40	23.0	•		•		39	55.7	16	17.2	•		•	
Student Attended																
Daycare	18	16.0	36	23.0	•		•		11	16.2	17	18.9	•		•	
Nursery School	12	11.0	39	24.0	•		•		5	7.5	22	24.4	•		•	
Headstart	16	15.0	23	14.0	•		•		10	15.2	10	10.9	•		•	
Kindergarten	107	76.0	157	89.0	•		•		47	67.1	67	81.7	•		•	

Research Question 6: ***What is the relationship between the support environment and dropping out of school?***

The importance of an educational and psychological support system in the home has been shown by several research studies (Frey, 1986; Ekstrom et al., 1986; Lopez and Alvarez, 1987). School leavers are less likely to discuss current experiences and future aspirations with parents (Massachusetts Advocacy Center and the Center for Early Adolescence, 1988). School attenders are more likely to be encouraged by family members, especially their mother, to finish school, whereas school leavers feel no such encouragement (Bickel et al., 1986; Martinez, 1983). Besides the absence of a family support system, most school leavers do not have a support network at school and tend to have friends and family members who also dropped out of school (Kite and Kizlik, 1987; San Diego City Schools, 1987; Valverde, 1987). Studies have also shown the importance of a mentor who serves as an advocate for the student (Delgado-Gaitan, 1987; Hispanic Education Task Force and Felice, 1986) and the presence of educational materials such as books in the home (Catterall, 1987; Rumberger, 1987) as factors which decrease a student's chances of leaving school.

This study's findings also suggested that a greater support environment, both at home and at school, increased the odds of a student remaining in school; however, the majority of both school leavers and school attenders did not feel comfortable discussing personal problems with school personnel. Findings also indicated that having good friends who were school leavers increased a student's chances of leaving school. The odds of staying in school were increased if study aids such as books and a quiet place to study were available to the student. Unlike previous studies, findings from this study indicated that the majority of both school leavers and school attenders were encouraged by parents and siblings to stay in school.

Study Results

Relationship With Others

* Significantly more school attenders reported feeling more comfortable discussing school problems with school personnel (teachers, counselors, and administrators), their parents, relatives, and a church person compared to school leavers.

* Over 70% of both school leavers and school attenders indicated feeling comfortable discussing school problems with their friends.

* While less than 30% of school attenders and school leavers felt comfortable discussing personal problems with teachers and principals, significantly more school attenders reported feeling comfortable discussing personal problems with counselors.

* Significantly more school attenders reported feeling comfortable discussing personal problems with parents.

* The majority of both groups reported feeling comfortable discussing personal problems with relatives.

* Although not statistically significant, more school attenders tended to feel comfortable discussing personal problems with friends, church people, and people from neighborhood centers.

* The majority of school leavers and school attenders indicated that they got along with parents and friends most of the time.

Encouragement

* The majority of school leavers and school attenders reported that the dropouts they knew were family members.

* Significantly more school leavers than school attenders indicated that the dropouts they knew were good friends.

* Significantly more school attenders than school leavers reported being encouraged to stay in school by school personnel.

* The majority of both groups of respondents indicated that parents and siblings encouraged them to stay in school.

* The majority of both groups indicated that no one encouraged them to leave school; however, significantly more school attenders reported that no one encouraged them to leave school.

* While few youth reported being encouraged to leave school by school personnel, more school leavers than school attenders tended to be encouraged to leave school by school personnel.

* Significantly more school leavers reported being encouraged to leave school by school administrators compared to school attenders.

Classroom Participation

* Significantly more school attenders asked questions in class when they didn't understand a lesson compared to school leavers.

* When they didn't understand a lesson, significantly more school leavers than school attenders either ignored it or asked questions after class.

STUDY AIDS

* Significantly more school attenders reported having dictionaries/encyclopedias and typewriters in their homes than school leavers.

* The majority of both groups indicated that they have a quiet place to study, have their own room, and have a calculator in their homes.

FAMILY

* Significantly more parents of school attenders than parents of school leavers reported that the school notified them of problems their son/daughter were having.

* While the majority of both school leavers and school attenders reported that family problems didn't influence them to leave school, more school leavers reported that family problems did influence them to leave school.

Research Question 7: ***What is the relationship between student involvement and gang activity, substance abuse, or criminal behavior and staying in or dropping out of school?***

Delinquent behavior, especially in junior high school, has been found to be a powerful predictor of which students drop out of school (Gainer and Sehgal, 1987; Institute for Educational Leadership, 1986b; Massachusetts Advocacy Center and the Center for Early Adolescence, 1988). Gangs, drugs, and their negative effects in schools and communities have also been studied and related to the lack of achievement in school (Kyle, 1984; Institute for Educational Leadership, 1986a).

Study findings also showed that behavioral problems such as participation in gang activity, alcohol and drug use, and criminal activity increase the chances that a student will drop out of school.

Study Results

* While the majority of school attenders and school leavers did not participate in gang activity, more school leavers tended to participate than school attenders.

* Significantly more parents of school leavers thought their children participate in gang activities than did parents of school attenders.

* The majority of school attenders and leavers reported that they do not drink alcohol. However, more leavers than attenders tend to drink alcohol.

* Almost no school attenders or school leavers reported using drugs.

* The majority of school attenders and school leavers have never been suspected of committing a crime. However, significantly more school leavers than school attenders tended to have been under suspicion of criminal acts.

* The majority of school attenders and school leavers have never been arrested for committing a crime. However, significantly more school leavers tended to be arrested than school attenders.

SS	Student Leavers
SA	Student Attenders
•	No Data Available

TABLE 6
The Effects of A Support Environment On Whether Or Not A Student Remains In School By Survey and Year

	Year 1 (Phase I) In-Person				Year 2 (Phase II) Student Telephone				Year 2 (Phase II) In-Person				Year 2 (Phase II) Parent Telephone			
	SL (N=138)		SA (N=177)		SL (N=72)		SA (N=105)		SL (N=70)		SA (N=93)		SL (N=75)		SA (N=85)	
	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)
Youth Encouraged To Leave School																
Parent	8	6.0	3	2.0		•		•								
Sibling	1	1.0	2	1.0	4	40.0	0	0.0	5	7.1	3	3.2		•		•
Peer	10	9.0	8	5.0		•		•	1	1.4	3	3.2		•		•
Teacher	8	7.0	0	0.0	6	6.0	4	80.0	20	28.6	15	16.9		•		•
•									3	4.3	1	1.1				•
Counselor	4	4.0	0	0.0		•		•	1	1.4	1	1.1		•		•
Administrator	10	9.0	0	0.0		•		•	5	7.1	1	1.1		•		•
No One		•		•		•		•	41	58.6	72	79.1		•		•
Youth Comfortable Discussing School Problem With:																
Teacher	76	56.0	135	76.0		•		•	33	47.1	70	75.3		•		•
Principal	50	37.0	95	54.0		•		•	25	35.7	55	59.8		•		•
Counselor	78	57.0	127	72.0		•		•	39	55.7	69	75.0		•		•
Parent	86	63.0	142	80.0		•		•	39	55.7	79	85.9		•		•
Friend	90	67.0	144	81.0		•		•	53	75.7	68	73.1		•		•
Church Person	33	24.0	77	44.0		•		•	28	40.0	59	63.4		•		•
Neighborhood Center	23	17.0	51	29.0		•		•	18	25.7	34	36.6		•		•
Parents' Notification of Problem By School																
Yes		•		•		•		•		•		•				
No, Has No Problem		•		•		•		•		•		•	43	57.3	36	42.4
No, Has Problems		•		•		•		•		•		•	21	28.0	46	54.1
													11	14.7	3	3.5
Family Problems Influenced Youth To Leave School																
Yes		•		•	18	25.0	9	8.0		•		•		•		•
No		•		•	54	75.0	98	92.0		•		•		•		•

SS	Student Leavers
SA	Student Attenders
•	No Data Available

TABLE 6 (continued)
The Effects of Behavorial Problems On A Student's Propensity To Remain In or Drop Out of School By Survey and Year

	Year 1 (Phase I) In-Person				Year 2 (Phase II) Student Telephone				Year 2 (Phase II) In Person				Year 2 (Phase II) Parent Telephone			
	SL (N=138)		SA (N=177)		SL (N=72)		SA (N=105)		SL (N=70)		SA (N=93)		SL (N=75)		SA (N=85)	
	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)
Gang Participation																
Yes	18	37.0	5	13.0	9	13.0	3	3.0	10	31.0	7	16.3	8	11.0	0	0.0
No	•		•		15	21.0	8	8.0	20	66.7	36	83.7	10	13.0	17	2.0
Alcohol Use																
Yes	54	39.0	31	18.0	19	26.0	10	9.0	2	2.9	2	2.2	•		•	
No	•		•		53	74.0	97	91.0	68	97.1	91	97.8	•		•	
Drug Use																
Yes	21	15.0	5	3.0	1	1.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	1.1	•		•	
No	•		•		71	99.0	105	100.0	70	100.0	92	98.9	•		•	
Formal Arrest																
Yes	34	24.0	14	8.0	•		•		19	27.1	5	5.4	•		•	
No	•		•		•		•		51	72.9	87	94.6	•		•	
Reason For Arrest																
Auto Related	•		•		•		•		7	50.0	3	75.0	•		•	
Theft	•		•		•		•		2	14.3	1	25.0	•		•	
Bodily Harm	•		•		•		•		1	7.1	0	0.0	•		•	
Chemical Related	•		•		•		•		4	28.6	0	0.0	•		•	

Research Question 8 ***What effects do selected student and parent aspirations and expectations have on students' propensity to drop out or stay enrolled in school?***

According to researchers (Hispanic Education Task Force & Felice, 1986; Velez, 1987) Hispanic school leavers are less future-oriented than Hispanics in school and they have lower educational aspirations than the general dropout populations, whereas Hispanic school attenders in school have the same educational aspirations as the general school population. The literature revealed contradictory findings related to parental aspirations and expectations. Some research shows that school leavers come from families with lower educational aspiration for their children (Massachusetts Advocacy Center and the Center for Early Adolescence, 1988) whereas other research shows that most parents care that their children succeed in school and thought it important for their children to finish high school (Delgado-Gaitan, 1987). School leavers also have lower occupational aspirations (Rumberger, 1987), but regardless of how badly they do in school, they "want to work and do work" (Institute for Educational Leadership, 1986a, p.23). Another attractive alternataive to school is the military because it is seen as a "safety net" (Institute for Educational Leadership, 1986a p. __) and, therefore, more school leavers are attracted to it.

Study findings showed that school leavers had similar aspirations as school attenders but lower expectations. Their parents, however, had the same aspirations and expectations for their children. The odds of students leaving school were increased only if the parents expected their children to join the military and/or marry before high school graduation.

Study Results

Future Employment

* More school leavers than school attenders reported that their parents expected them to work to support the family.

* Significantly more school leavers than school attenders did not know what they would be doing in five years.

* While the majority of school attenders chose protective service, technical, professional, or official/administrator positions as jobs they would <u>like</u> to have, fewer than half of the school leavers reported that they would <u>like</u> to have these types of jobs.

* School attenders tended to <u>expect</u> jobs that they would <u>like</u> to have compared to school leavers. Parents of school attenders also reflected this trend.

Future Education

* Significantly more school attenders than school leavers expected to attend college.

* About half of the school leavers expected to receive less than a high school education.

* More school leavers than school attenders did not to know how much education they would receive.

* Significantly more school attenders expected to be furthering their schooling in five years than did school leavers.

* Significantly more school attenders than school leavers planned to return to school in the fall, whereas significantly more school leavers than school attenders were undecided as to returning to school in the fall.

Parents' Aspirations and Expectations

* The majority of both school attenders and school leavers reported that their parents expected them to finish high school, go to college, get more education than their parents, and get a better job than their parents. However, the percentages for these results were higher for school attenders than school leavers.

* Significantly more school leavers than school attenders reported that their parents expected them to join the military.

* More school leavers than school attenders reported that their parents expected them to marry before high school graduation. Significantly more parents of school leavers than school attenders said the same.

* Fewer than half of the parents of school attenders reported that they would like their children to have protective service, technical, professional, or official/administrator jobs.

SS	Student Leavers
SA	Student Attenders
•	No Data Available

TABLE 7
The Effects of Student and Parent Aspirations On A Student's Propensity To To Remain In or Drop Out of School By Survey and Year

	Year 1 (Phase I) In-Person				Year 2 (Phase II) Student Telephone				Year 2 (Phase II) In-Person				Year 2 (Phase II) Parent Telephone			
	SL (N=138)		SA (N=177)		SL (N=72)		SA (N=105)		SL (N=70)		SA (N=93)		SL (N=75)		SA (N=85)	
	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)
Job Student Would Like To Have																
Service Maintenance		•		•	2	3.0	1	1.0	3	4.3	2	2.2		•		•
Skilled Craft Worker		•		•	12	17.0	13	12.0	14	20.0	10	10.8	6	8.2	4	4.7
Office and Clerical		•		•	12	17.0	11	10.0	19	27.1	9	9.7	12	16.2	13	15.3
Paraprofessional		•		•	3	4.0	2	2.0	2	2.9	3	3.2	1	1.4	2	2.4
Technician		•		•	17	24.0	25	23.0	6	8.6	16	17.2	9	12.3	16	18.8
Professional		•		•	12	17.0	26	24.0	15	21.4	46	49.5	14	19.2	21	24.7
Official/Administrator		•		•	5	8.0	12	11.0	1	1.4	0	0.0	2	2.7	3	3.5
Protective Service Worker		•		•	2	3.0	4	4.0	1	1.4	3	3.2	2	2.7	0	0.0
Job Student Expects To Have																
Service Maintenance		•		•	2	3.0	2	2.0	3	4.3	1	1.0	3	4.1	0	0.0
Skilled Craft Worker		•		•	15	21.0	12	11.0	17	24.3	12	12.9	5	6.8	9	10.6
Office and Clerical		•		•	8	11.0	10	9.0	13	18.6	14	15.1	4	5.4	8	9.4
Paraprofessional		•		•	0	0.0	1	1.0	1	1.4	2	2.2	1	1.4	3	3.5
Technician		•		•	10	14.0	22	21.0	3	4.3	9	9.7	6	8.1	13	15.3
Professional		•		•	8	11.0	17	16.0	4	5.7	33	35.5	13	17.6	15	17.6
Official/Administrator		•		•	1	1.0	11	10.0	1	1.4	0	0.0	1	1.4	2	2.4
Protective Service Worker		•		•	2	3.0	2	2.0	0	0.0	3	3.2	3	4.1	6	7.1
Parents Expect Student To																
Finish High School	123	90.0	174	99.0	65	90.0	104	97.0	45	65.2	89	95.7	57	76.0	85	100.0
Go To College	73	53.0	129	73.0	42	61.0	78	74.0	27	39.1	68	76.4	44	58.7	79	94.0
Join the Military	41	30.0	33	19.0	22	31.0	14	14.0	19	27.1	15	16.5	35	46.7	38	45.8
Marry Before Graduation	19	14.0	5	3.0	9	12.0	5	5.0	3	4.3	3	3.3	8	10.7	3	3.5
Be Already Married		•		•	0	0.0	2	2.0	11	15.7	0	0.0	4	5.3	0	0.0
Work To Support Family	54	39.0	57	32.0	30	42.0	32	30.0	31	44.9	32	35.6	36	48.8	25	29.4
Marry Right After High School	34	25.0	15	8.0	10	14.0	4	9.0	5	7.8	9	10.0	20	26.7	24	28.4
Get More Education Than Parent	132	96.0	174	99.0	64	89.0	105	99.0	60	88.2	91	97.8	70	93.3	84	98.8
Get Better Job Than Parent	130	95.0	172	98.0	67	93.0	104	98.0	59	85.5	85	92.4	73	97.3	84	98.8

SS	Student Leavers
SA	Student Attenders
•	No Data Available

TABLE 7 (continued)
The Effects of Student and Parent Aspirations On A Student's Propensity To Remain In or Drop Out of School By Survey and Year

	Year 1 (Phase I) In-Person				Year 2 (Phase II) Student Telephone				Year 2 (Phase II) In-Person				Year 2 (Phase II) Parent Telephone			
	SL (N=138)		SA (N=177)		SL (N=72)		SA (N=105)		SL (N=70)		SA (N=93)		SL (N=75)		SA (N=85)	
	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)
Expected Level Of Education																
Less Than High School	•		•		•		•		4	5.7	1	1.1	•		•	
GED	•		•		•		•		36	51.4	0	0.0	•		•	
High School Graduation	•		•		•		•		6	8.6	15	16.1	•		•	
Vocational/Trade/Business	•		•		•		•		8	11.4	10	10.8	•		•	
College	•		•		•		•		9	12.9	63	67.7	•		•	
Don't Know	•		•		•		•		7	10.0	4	4.3	•		•	
What Student Expects In Five Years																
Marriage/Housewife/Husband	•		•		5	7.0	4	4.0	•		•		•		•	
Working	•		•		43	60.0	50	47.0	•		•		•		•	
High School Graduate	•		•		0	0.0	2	2.0	•		•		•		•	
Enter Military	•		•		0	0.0	6	6.0	•		•		•		•	
Further Schooling	•		•		3	4.0	34	32.0	•		•		•		•	
Don't Know	•		•		19	26.0	10	9.0	•		•		•		•	

Research Question 9 ***What student, school or family/community characteristics have been found to predict dropping out?***

Findings from this study showed that most students left school between the ages of 14-17. Most were single when they left school, and their parents were married and employed; their fathers working as skilled laborers and their mothers in service maintenance jobs.

Slightly more than half of the students were unemployed, but of those working, most were in service maintenance jobs or performing skilled work. Nearly half wanted to return to school but needed assistance and support in order to return.

Study Results

* The majority of school leavers were between the ages of 14-17 when they dropped out of school.
* The majority of school leavers were single when they left school; less than one-fourth of them were married when they left school.
* The overwhelming majority of parents of school leavers were married when youth left school.
* Three-fourths of the fathers of school leavers were working full-time when youth left school.
* Fewer than half of the fathers of school leavers had jobs as skilled workmen when youth left school; less than one-fourth worked in service maintenance jobs.
* Fewer than half of the mothers of school leavers were working full-time when youth left school. Slightly more than half of the mothers of school leavers were working full-time or part-time when youth left school.
* Of the mothers of school leavers who were working when youth left school, more than one-third of them worked in service maintenance jobs, less than one-fourth worked in skilled work.
* Of the youth reporting currently working, more youth reported having skilled work or service maintenance jobs.
* More than half of the school leavers currently employed reported working 16-40 hours per week; more than one-third of them reported working 41 or more hours per week.
* The main reason given by school leavers for working was to help out at home.
* The majority of school leavers currently working reported earning between $3.35 - $4.99 per hour.

* The majority of school leavers reported the type of assistance needed in order to return to school was school-related and self/personal. More than half of the parents of school leavers, on the other hand, stated that the type of assistance needed to help youth return to school was support-related and school-related.

* Almost half of the school leavers stated they had first thought about leaving school in the 9th grade.

* Over one-third of the school leavers stated that the main reasons they wanted to leave school were because they disliked school, school was too hard, or classes were boring.

* Almost half of the school leavers stated they were currently working.

* More than half of the school leavers stated they were working in a factory or holding service jobs.

* One-fourth of the school leavers currently working have held a job for 12 months; one-fourth have held a job from one to two months.

* Slightly less than half of the school leavers stated that what could have kept them in school until graduation was related to classroom and school organization.

* More than half of the school leavers stated that what could have kept them in school until graduation was related to classroom organization, school organization and self/personal reasons.

* Both school leavers and parents of school leavers indicated that in the 9th grade was when most students had left school.

* More than half of the students had left school in the 9th or 10th grade.

* More than three-fourths of parents of school leavers wanted students to return to school.

* Almost half of the parents of school leavers stated that students wanted to return to school.

PARENT NOTIFICATION

* More than half of the parents of school leavers stated they had been notified when student dropped out of school.

* More than one-third of the parents of school leavers stated they had not been notified when student dropped out of school.

Table 8

Characteristics of Students Who Leave School

At the time students left school:	Current Status:
Age Mean age: 16.5 Range Highest: 20 Lowest: 13	Youth's Employment Status Working (46.5%)
Marital Status Single (84.3%)	Youth's Job Service Maintenance (33.0%) Skilled Work (33.0%)
Father's Employment Status Working full-time (70.0%) or part-time (8.6%)	Reason for Working Help at Home (51.7%)
Mother's Employment Status Working full-time (40.0%) or part-time (12.9%)	No. of Months at Present Job 12 (25.0%)
	Hours Per Week 16 - 40 (58.0%) More than 40 (36.0%)

School Characteristics

Grade Youth First Thought of Leaving School 9th (47.9%)

Main Reason Wanted to Leave School Work Too Hard (14.1%)
Boring Classes (15.5%)

Grade Youth Left School 9th (45.9%)

Parent's Desire For Youth To Return to School Yes (82.4%)

Change Needed For Youth to Re-enroll Support (44.4%)
(e.g., child-care, counseling/guidance, financial, transportation)

Parents Notificated of Youth's Dropping Out Yes (62.2%)
No (37.8%)

Research Question 10: ***What school characteristics do administrators, counselors, teachers, and parents perceive as having an effect on students' propensity to drop-out or stay enrolled in school until graduation?***

Study findings showed that school personnel saw several needs within the school in order to achieve full Hispanic school enrollment. School personnel indicated a need for parental support and involvement, for a lower student-personnel ratio, to coordinate the use of community resources, for more student involvement and motivation, and for better teachers.

Parents indicated a need for better home-school communication and a more positive school learning environment.

Study Results

Ideal School

* Administrators, counselors, and teachers indicated the ideal school would have active parental involvement, a lower student-personnel ratio, and more student involvement and participation.

* Administrators also thought teacher characteristics were important in the ideal school. The ideal teachers would be well-qualified, self-motivated, innovative, meet student needs, and be a mentor.

* Counselors felt the ideal school would involve less paperwork and allow for more counseling time.

* Teachers felt the ideal school would provide a comfortable, pleasant school environment and more individualized programs and instruction.

* The ideal school would have better communication from home to school and a positive learning environment for students.

Assisting Forces

* Administrators, counselors, and teachers all agreed the ESOL Program and supportive, dedicated teachers and personnel were assisting forces in achieving the ideal school.

* Counselors indicated that other programs such as the PASS TEAMS, Communities-In-School, and Intensive Service along with the availability of child care were assisting forces.

* Bilingual communication and information from the school, good personnel and curriculum, and active parental involvement were assisting forces mentioned by parents.

Restraining Forces

* School personnel thought the major restraining forces included too much paperwork for teachers and counselors, the lack of or little parental support and involvement.

* Administrators felt hindered by the restrictive state-mandated curriculum, insensitive teachers, and the lack of student motivation.

* Counselors felt restrained by the large amounts of paperwork (which left little time to counsel students), and the large student/counselor ratio.

* Teachers indicated too much paperwork, inadequate materials, lack of funds, and apathy in the school as restraining forces.

* Parents indicated a negative learning environment, poor teaching, and teenage pregnancy as restraining forces.

Necessary Steps to Achieve Idea school

* School personnel indicated that schools need to increase teacher sensitivity and awareness to multiethnic changes and problems within the school, increase parental involvement and awareness of required skills and responsibilities, and provide a comprehensive curriculum that develops the whole child.

* Parents indicated a need for schools to provide motivating, inspiring, and enriching activities and experiences; develop a "problem-solving" group so that students and parents are able to consult with qualified personnel; and deal with pertinent social issues in the classroom.

TABLE 9
MAJOR FINDINGS FROM A FOCUS-GROUP INTERVIEW:
DISD HISPANIC DROPOUT STUDY

Ideal School Responses (based on individual responses)

- active parental involvement/better parenting skills
- more student participation in extracurricular activities
- a varied and relevant curriculum
- a pleasant school environment

Assisting Forces (based on individual responses)

- good, dedicated, supporting, concerned, responsive, and less apathetic teachers
- ESOL Program

Restraining Forces (based on individual responses)

- too much paperwork for teachers and counselors
- lack of/little parental involvement or support
- large student/teacher ratios
- a restrictive state-mandated curriculum

Necessary Steps to Achieve Ideal (based on group responses)

- increased teacher sensitivity and awareness to multi-ethnic changes and problems within school
- more parental involvement
- provide a comprehensive curriculum that develops the whole child
- increase parenting awareness skills and responsibilities of parenthood, require parent workshop attendance

Predictive Model

A series of multiple regression analyses were conducted for the purpose of identifying variables which would predict which students were most likely to drop out of school. Data for the analyses were obtained from several different sources: student and parent data from Phase I and II, and student archival records. Missing data, attributable to non-responses from the subjects and incomplete student records, resulted in loss of cases for statistical analyses. Specifically, non-responses in surveys resulted in less than half of the eligible cases being used in the final analysis (approximately 40%). An even greater percentage of archival data was incomplete, resulting in even fewer cases being used in any analyses involving student records (approximately 30%). The implications of these missing data are two-fold: (1) generalizations made from the final analysis must be made cautiously; with more complete records and responses the relative importance of variables in some of the regression models could change, and (2) incomplete school records themselves could be considered predictive of dropping out, for the evidence suggests that students who drop out of school are more likely to have incomplete official records.

Results from the Student Archival Records

The previously mentioned loss of cases resulting from merging school archival data with survey results led to a series of separate regressions using only the archival data. Results from these analyses show that the strongest predictors of a student dropping out of school are age, variables related to poverty, language difficulties, and poor performance in math and reading.

Results from the Student and Parent Surveys

Regression analyses were conducted on 1987 student and parent data. The variables found to be predictive of dropping out were also used in regression analyses conducted on 1988 student and parent data. Results from analyses of combined student and parent data show that, for both years, the age of a student, not having attended kindergarten, not having discussed problems with counselors, and having fathers born outside of the U.S. increase the probability of a student dropping out of school. Results from analyses conducted on (only) student data show that age, middle school mobility, drug use, and not discussing problems with counselors are also dropout predictors for both 1987 and 1988 data.

The 1988 survey contained questions that distinguished three groups of respondents: school leavers, school attenders who never thought about leaving school, and school attenders who thought about dropping out. Results from an analysis of variance showed marked differences between groups.

School attenders who never thought about leaving school were more likely to:

* like school counselors
* believe that school administrators are in control
* be involved in school hobbies or clubs
* have attended kindergarten
* say they have discussed problems with counselors
* say administrators encouraged them to stay
* expect to go to college
* have parents who attend school programs
* have parents who expect them to graduate and go to college.

They are less likely to:

* have changed middle schools
* have had their parents asked to a school conference
* have friends who encouraged them to leave.

School attenders who thought of leaving school were more like school attenders who never thought of leaving school on the following issues:

* believing administrators are in control
* the extent of middle school mobility
* saying that administrators encourage them to stay
* having parents who expect them to graduate from high school.

They are more similar to the school leavers on:

* not liking counselors
* not participating in hobby and club activities
* having parents asked to go to school
* not discussing problems with counselors
* having friends encourage them to leave school
* not expecting to go to college
* having parents who do not attend school programs or expect them to go to college.

Some of these variables may represent symptoms of the problems that lead to leaving school, but in combination they suggest that there is a complex set of relationships involving friends, family, counselors, administrators, and school activities that help distinguish school leavers and potential leavers from other students. It may be that positive experiences in two or three of these areas can offset negative experiences in the others.

PART II: RECOMMENDATIONS

The following report presents a summary of findings for each of the sections of the triad "Student, Family/Community and School" followed by recommendations for the prevention and recovery of dropouts. These recommendations are based primarily on this study's empirical findings as well as current relevant literature and IDRA's experience in the field of education and dropout prevention and recovery.

The recommendations will have the most impact if they are interrelated and interdependent. They will have least impact if only used as a list from which to pick and choose.

The current push to have observable and measurable responses to the dropout problem are noted in the catalog of dropout prevention "programs" which the district has been identifying and generating over the past two years. Without implying insignificance to the myriad of responses at the campus and district level, what is recommended is not a longer list of programs but a process that combines, correlates, integrates, and in fact supports a total safety net around family, campus and student to have a major impact on the Hispanic dropout problem. No one specific suggestion listed, by itself, is a panacea. The whole list, in the context suggested, would significantly increase the number of students staying in school, continuing their education with renewed motivation, and at a minimum, successfully complete their high school studies.

The three points of the triangle, STUDENT, FAMILY/COMMUNITY AND SCHOOL, provide the structure for the recommended strategies.

STUDENTS

Student Findings:

Differences were found between DISD Hispanic students who left school and those who remained in the areas of age at grade level, reasons for working while in school, the extent of a support network, behavioral problems, perceived self-esteem, and control over their lives.

Specifically, Hispanic students in the DISD have a greater chance of leaving school before graduation if they:

* change schools repeatedly;
* have children of their own at home;
* work more than 15 hours per week while in school, mainly to help with home expenses;

- participate in gang activity, use alcohol or drugs, or are involved in criminal activity;
- have low expectations regarding future employment and education;
- do not feel satisfied with themselves; and
- do not believe they can change the important things in their lives.

Present Status

Over half of Hispanic school leavers surveyed are unemployed. One in five is married and has children.

Almost half of Hispanic school leavers surveyed want to return to school but need school-related assistance in order to return, i.e., "a different school," "nice teachers," GED assistance, flexible hours, school safety.

There were no differences between those who left school and those who remained in the following areas:

- Birthplace (majority of both groups are U.S. born);
- Home language (majority of both groups speak English and Spanish at home);
- Type of employment if working while in school (most work in service maintenance jobs in order to have spending money or to help with home expenses. Most earn slightly above minimum wage).

STUDENT RECOMMENDATIONS

STUDENT-CENTERED

A major focus of the recommendations is that responses be student-centered, suggesting that all services and strategies be integrated to assist the student in a whole or complete way. The ideal school environment is one where staff holds positive assumptions and perceptions of the student, which reduces the chances of any teacher or other adult discouraging the student from staying in school, and increases the number of adults that will encourage the student to stay in school. Each student has at least one adult professional who is concerned with all aspects of the student's life and able to guide and coordinate the instruction and support systems to optimum benefit for the student. Additionally, the student focus continues with teams or committees of teachers and other adults dealing with each student who communicate regularly to assess the student's needs, and progress and make recommendations to insure the student's success.

Recommendations to policy makers:

Apply those State requirements that raise standards and provide the necessary academic support services needed for all children to meet those standards;

Support flexible curriculum and prerequisites to increase the opportunities for students to learn subjects that they wouldn't otherwise take, relate instruction to future needs, and provide the necessary survival skills.

Recommendations to central office administration:

Interpret and implement state education regulations judiciously and support the spirit that every student should succeed;

Modify schedules and school hours to accommodate students who must work during the regular school day;

Identify and coordinate with social service programs to provide child care for students with children;

Survey all students that might qualify for work-study experience under JTPA and assist in obtaining proper certification for those that qualify;

Provide a balanced work-study program for students with economic needs.

Recommendations to principals and support staff:

Intensify counseling and support for 7th and 9th graders, with strong collaboration among campuses for intercampus transitions;

Disseminate information about child care services to students with children;

Support career/vocational guidance through year-round activities on:

- future schooling/career guidance
- goal setting and life planning
- career motivation through content instruction
- course/content embedded connection between particular skills and requirements of professions
- building high professional aspirations and the motivation to acquire skills needed;

Develop and select work projects appropriate to the educational skills or competencies required;

Monitor work-study schedules for all students and provide alternatives for those students working over 15 hours per week.

Recommendations for teachers:

Encourage students to develop a positive attitude about themselves as well as the language of their home and neighborhood community;

Engage the students' whole personalities in integrating what they learn in class and how they live outside class;

Bring native speakers into the classroom who grew up in similar contexts and who have overcome similar language and social obstacles;

Provide a variety of creative consequences for misbehavior, such as service tasks, that increase responsible behavior without increasing the number of dropouts;

Motivate students toward careers through content instruction; relate specific skills to professional requisites;

Design activities to build high professional aspirations and motivate students to acquire skills needed;

Create situations for at-risk students to experience leadership and encourage participation in a broad spectrum of extracurricular activities.

Recommendations for businesses, public/private service organizations and volunteer groups outside of the school system:

Sponsor career activities: shadowing on-the-job, illustrating job skills, exposing students to multiplicity of career ladders within professions, internships, literature on careers, job fairs;

Develop pre-professional/pre-employment courses for schools, for credit, of current high demand/projected demand professions;

Provide awards for a variety of nontraditional achievements, recognize student improvement;

Provide training for leadership in nonschool settings.

FAMILY/COMMUNITY

Family/Community Findings:

Differences were found between DISD Hispanic students who left school and those who remained in the areas of parents' educational level, father's employment status, family problems, (especially financial concerns), parental expectations for their children's future, parents' perceived control over their lives or their children's decision to leave school, and parents' encouragement of school/community activities and bilingualism.

Specifically, Hispanic students in the DISD have a greater chance of leaving school before graduation if:

* their parents have a low educational level;
* their fathers are unemployed;
* both parents are not living in the same household;
* their parents discourage bilingualism;
* their parents do not believe they or the school can do something to help students remain in school;
* their parents visit school mainly in response to discipline problems;
* their parents do not encourage them to participate in school/community and out-of-school activities;
* study aids such as a quiet place to study, reference books, etc. are not available in the home;
* family problems, household responsibilities or financial concerns exist in the home;
* they believe their parents expect them to work in order to support the family;
* parents expect their children to join the military or marry before high school graduation;
* they are not encouraged to remain in school by their family, school and church personnel (also due to the lack of the support network);
* parents do not believe they have internal control or mastery over their lives.

Most parents of Hispanic school leavers want them to return to school and believe their children also want to return but need support.

There were no differences between the parents of students who left school and those who remained in the following areas:

* parents' employment (most parents of both groups work: fathers as skilled laborers, mothers in service maintenance jobs);
* parents' expectations for their children (most parents of both groups have high expectations for their children and believe their children will attain those goals);

* parents' desires for more parent meetings and school programs (provided they are responsive to parent needs and concerns);

* parents' positive self-esteem and mastery over their own lives.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FAMILY/COMMUNITY

FAMILY-CENTERED

The involvement of parents is crucial. The current findings reinforce what the literature indicates: parents are an important influence in the education of their children. Support for the family directly increases the chances that a student will stay in school and complete his/her schooling. The recommendations are based on positive assumptions about Hispanic families. A family-centered approach involves regular and consistent interaction between home and school, and the encouragement of parents to participate in all aspects of the educational process.

Recommendations to policy makers:

Support the on-going coordination with social service providers and the expansion of social services to families;

Extend adult education services and support coordination with post-secondary institutions to provide comprehensive educational services to families, especially in a context where the parents go to evening classes on campus while students are receiving tutorial services and enrichment;

Require bilingual parent outreach initiatives, flexible meeting times, and transportation;

Model positive communication districtwide;

Continue and expand the allocation of resources for training and support of parent involvement;

Provide increased opportunities for input by Hispanic parents in their neighborhoods and in their language.

Recommendations to central office administration:

Direct campus-level comprehensive counseling assistance for families;

Continue to work with heads of social service agencies and similar counterparts to develop a cooperative network for coordination and expansion of social services to families;

Initiate, expand, support and direct campus-level:

- information about campus-level services,
- programs for families,
- adult education services coordinated with post-secondary institutions to provide comprehensive educational services to families.

Direct and assist campuses in implementing extensive bilingual outreach initiatives;

Monitor communication with families to insure that they are positive and promote team-building;

Require that campus plans focus on increased interaction between families and schools;

Coordinate resources to campuses which provide information and training on how parents can teach their children and extend, support, and monitor school work in order to insure student success;

Coordinate and provide resources to campuses to provide information and training to enhance families' ability to counsel students, to give input in their neighborhoods and in their language.

Recommendations to principals and support staff:

Support family counseling assistance that increases a support network for the student;

Facilitate family casework counseling and total family assistance; encourage social service information/referral services;

Coordinate assistance to student in the context of the family;

Support family counseling and assistance to reduce stress at home;

Facilitate special support for families with single parents, working mothers; parents with limited formal education; substance abuse prevention and intervention;

Increase information dissemination about school procedures and all essential information a parent needs to make wise choices for their children; materials and communications must be in English/Spanish and in formats that are clear and understandable by families;

Disseminate information about educational services for parents and adults;

Set up and coordinate evening educational programs for families on campus;

Offer social service and educational institutions support and space to provide educational services to families;

Consider educational offerings such as GED, ESL, AMNESTY English requirements, nutrition and crafts courses, literacy, and job skills as the catalysts for greater parent involvement and parents' role-modeling for students;

Delegate extensive parent outreach from campus personnel; ideally a full-time parent-liaison person that is bilingual and effective in increasing parent participation;

Model positive parent communications that are personal, show concrete evidence of school attempts to work with their children, and illustrate a variety of ways to show student success;

Increase parent school visits for positive events such as recognition of students for a variety of reasons: school programs teacher meetings and parent meetings;

Provide information and training to parents on instruction, parenting and leadership.

Recommendations for Teachers:

Be sensitive to family social needs and when appropriate, refer to social service agencies;

Disseminate information to parents about educational opportunities, parenting and leadership;

Encourage parent/teacher conferences for a variety of reasons, including to share the student's strengths and potential; contact the family through a variety of means, including outreach to the home; share a variety of examples of student work;

Send information to parents about the classroom assignments. When appropriate, give parents suggestions on how to extend, enhance or review skills taught in class.

Recommendations for businesses, public/private service organizations and volunteer groups outside of the school system:

Coordinate with school personnel for comprehensive services including:
- parent outreach, information and referral for economic and social needs,
- parent support networks,
- child and family advocacy,
- crisis intervention.

Provide external resources for training parents about the school system; offer assertiveness training classes; support school-home communication that is understandable to the Hispanic parents;

SCHOOL

SCHOOL FINDINGS:

Differences were found between DISD Hispanic students who left school and those who remained in their attitudes towards school personnel, their desire to change their school's ethnic composition, their retention and absentee rates, and the encouragement (or lack thereof) from their families and school personnel to remain in school.

Specifically, Hispanic students in the DISD have a greater chance of leaving school before graduation if they:

* feel negatively about teachers and administrators;
* think teachers dislike Hispanics;
* believe that they do not read or write English very well;
* perceive teachers and other students as liking negative characteristics (e.g., gang members, dropouts);
* have frequent disciplinary problems;
* feel uncomfortable discussing school or personal problems with school personnel, parents and friends (i.e., have limited support network);
* do not believe graduation is important and believe their parents think the same;
* first think about leaving school in the transition years (7,9) because school work is too hard or they want/need to work;
* think there are too many white and black students;
* do not participate in school/community and out-of-school activities ;
* receive failing grades, regardless of school grade level;
* are retained during the middle and high school years;
* are overage for their grade level;
* have a high absentee rate due mainly to "boring classes" and "feeling out of place";
* did not attend nursery school;

* are encouraged to leave school by school personnel;

* do not participate in the classroom.

Most Hispanic students who leave school do so because of problems with school personnel or pregnancy.

There were no differences between Hispanic students who leave school and those who remain in the following areas:

* helps and hindrances (most believe study skills help the most in school and peer pressure and peer harassment are the greatest hindrances);

* high school graduation (most believe it is important to finish high school);

* number of Hispanic teachers (most feel there are not enough);

* participation in middle and high school activities (e.g., sports);

* encouragement to remain in school (although school attenders have a wider support network);

* knowing good friends or family members who have dropped out of school;

* knowing peers who are most likely to encourage students to leave school.

SCHOOL RECOMMENDATIONS

CAMPUS FOCUS SUPPORT

In keeping with the positive and comprehensive approach, programs, services and strategies would be campus-wide rather than program specific. Rather than identifying a program, room or strategy as "dropout prevention" or "at-risk", campuses with significant numbers of Hispanic at-risk students would be targeted for resources that would produce student-centered/family-focused schools. Rather than stigmatized students and programs, there would be valued campuses, staff, students and families.

In the context of scarce resources, the support for campuses can come from a reorganization and reallocation of present resources and personnel, yet there will be a need for additional resources.

ACCELERATED LEARNING

The school context recommended: learning activities characterized by high expectations; a learning environment characterized by high status for the participants; a faster-paced curriculum that actively engages the students' interest and motivates them to learn. All students are targeted for success within the total context of the curriculum and instruction, in an accelerated rather than a traditional, slower remediation effort.

Overageness is counterbalanced by cross-age placements, individualized academic support for meeting increased standards, setting and meeting goals on student outcomes and achievement, and supporting a student focus that accelerates learning while decreasing frustration and failure.

There are two seemingly opposed stresses or counterbalancing forces on the present-day campus: on the one hand, the total needs of the student, some of which if not met; (e.g., lack of proper nourishment, adequate clothing and safe shelter) preclude the possibility of instructing him/her. On the other hand are the limits of any campus being all things to all students, beyond the primary concern of education. Some students are having their nutritional needs met through free or reduced-fee lunches.

Other needs can be met through the establishment of information and referral procedures, with the assistance of local social service agencies, so that without overburdening the campus, student and family needs are met, and thereby removing impediments to the student's ability to attend school and pay attention in class.

Adult education services, provided by the district, the community college or other entity, when facilitated on campus as part of a coordinated effort simultaneous with child care, student tutoring/ mentoring, and parent/teacher conferences, have a positive impact. Though the actual content of the class might be very basic, and not be adequate to prepare the parent to assist the student with homework, the fact that the parent is a student provides a powerful model for the child. Beyond educational services for literacy and citizenship needs, campuses can offer instruction and resources to assist parents in their roles as teachers and counselors.

Recommendations to policy makers:

Provide support for all campuses to be valued and have high status use any negative identification of some campuses as a signal for increased and accelerated services;

Require campus-level plans and activities to increase student awareness of careers and post-secondary opportunities.

Recommendations to central office administration:

Provide the financial and staff support for campuses with high concentrations of at-risk, Hispanic students in order to create high-status and accelerated instruction;

Encourage increased participation of at-risk students in extracurricular activities;

Hire and place more Hispanic and bilingual staff on campuses that have significant concentrations of Hispanic students;

Require that campus plans include: activities which enhance student's self-concept and increase participation of at-risk students in extracurricular activities; alternatives that truly allow for academic learning without the ill-effects of stigma, rote-learning, and isolation; activities which increase student awareness of careers and postsecondary opportunities; support expansion of student leadership roles (beyond the current and traditional student leadership roles) and the inclusion of at-risk students.

Recommendations to principals and support staff:

Support curricular and scheduling flexibility to increase student academic success;

Support teacher scheduling that allows for adequate planning, instructional time, and the formation of teacher/adult teams as support groups for each student;

Support appropriate language instruction, providing bilingual and ESL approaches as appropriate and enriching alternatives;

Personalize the scheduling process in support of each student's optimum class schedule;

Assure that students are being taught at an appropriate, optimal instruction level and pace;

Encourage a variety of contexts for instruction that are student-centered;

Reduce the focus on teaching "to-the-test" for state and locally required tests;

Support a program of accelerated learning and critical thinking for "at-risk" students;

Encourage flexible curriculum and prerequisites to increase the opportunities for students to learn, include the at-risk students in subject matter from which they traditionally have been excluded;

Coordinate tutoring and other individualized efforts to increase student learning;

Provide viable alternatives for retention and social promotion;

Create and support a discipline management system that promotes order and respect; reduces the

need for punitive measures; and offers a variety of creative consequences, such as service tasks, that increase responsible behavior;

Support extracurricular involvement and leadership for all students in a variety of activities, including student-initiated events; recognize leadership in new or nontraditional ways and settings.

Recommendations for Teachers:

Personalize and individualize the curriculum and teaching approaches, methodologies, and materials based on observed learning styles of the students;

Use learning activities characterized by high expectations and facilitate a learning environment characterized by high status;

Integrate activities in the classroom that promote positive self-concept, dignity, responsibility, decision-making, sensitivity to others' unique qualities, different cultures, languages, countries,etc;.

Measure learning and growth with a variety of procedures.

Recommendations for businesses, public/private service organizations and volunteer groups outside the school system:

Provide content experts and rolemodels to enhance classroom instruction;

Increase access to computers, software and technology for students and families;

Provide tutors for students and families;

Create accessible alternative study areas/settings;

Sponsor field trips/on-site experiences to enhance content learning;

Provide volunteers/mentors;

Provide workshops, sessions on relevant topics; adopt a campus;

Sponsor fun activities, field trips, extracurricular events;

Organize hot-line volunteers.

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